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The Economist and Public Policy

by PATRICK LYNCH

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I

PRETENTIOUS titles have one advantage, particularly when they cover a well-worn subject: they indicate, at least, an awareness of certain problems even if it be accompanied by little evidence of a capacity to solve them. The present subject permits one to refer to some limited aspects of public policy, as these might appear to a student of economics, and to direct attention to a few of the issues relating to its creation and execution. An attempt will be made to discuss generally some economic and social functions of a modern government, to point to what appear to be some popular misconceptions concerning them, and to comment on the role of public servants in discharging their social and economic responsibilities.

It has become a platitude of press and platform that where the present century has not seen the complete destruction of free political institutions it has produced a growing tendency towards enlarging the power of the state at the cost of individual freedom. These tendencies exist, it is said, not merely in democratic countries which are adopting socialist forms of organization, but in non-socialist countries as well. In a paper[1] which he recently read to the Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland, Mr. F. C. King, Barrister-at-Law, presented a commentary on this trend as he observed it in Ireland: his views generally were summarized in a short passage at the end of his address:—

> We have noted the growing power of the Executive in relation to Parliament, the Courts and the people. We have noted, too, a certain intolerance of any restraint on the Executive power. We seemed to catch a glimpse at times of the ugly face of Absolutism peering through departmental windows. It has not been suggested that all this has sprung from tyrannical motives. On the contrary, the chief motive seems to have been to make the work of the Executive easier, to enable it to take short cuts to its goals even though this might entail trampling roughshod over the rights of individuals.
>
> Underlying the whole process there has been an acute problem which government has constantly disregarded and which by its neglect has been accentuated. The problem is that of reconciling authority with personal

[1] F. C. King: *Drifting to Absolutism.* Read October 30, 1952. Statistical and Social Inquiry Society of Ireland.

> freedom. There should have gone alongside the extension of government powers an extended system of safeguards for the citizen. The contrary has happened. Each extension of state function and the consequent increase of state authority has narrowed and rendered more precarious the freedom of the individual.

The dangers of which Mr. King wrote are, no doubt, very real. Part of the difficulty has arisen because legal institutions have been unable to adapt themselves rapidly enough to the conditions created when the state acquires extended social and economic powers. It is the merit of Mr. King's approach, however, to distinguish clearly between the state's exercise of these powers and its abuse of them. But some writers, who quite legitimately point to the dangers of state action, present an unbalanced picture by doing less than justice to the formidable arguments in favour of it.

Many contemporary critics of what is commonly called "government intervention" are content to concentrate on the abuses and to leave it to be inferred that individual freedom can be protected only by an arbitrary abatement of state activity. In their view, government interference, if it cannot be extirpated entirely, should be regarded at best as a necessary evil. In an attempt to reinforce their case they frequently avail themselves of historical arguments to support a contention that government action of this kind is a transient phenomenon of recent origin, that it began in exceptional political and economic circumstances, and that when these have passed the government should restore the functions it has usurped to the private interests that previously directed them. This view, however, must be challenged, not for the purpose of advocating an unlimited enlargement of the powers of the state, nor, indeed, for discounting the need for vigorous and persistent vigilance wherever these powers are employed, but to draw attention to the permanent nature of much state activity and to the necessity for recognizing the essentially positive functions of a modern government. It is easy enough to point to some of these misconceptions, but to remove them is a matter of much difficulty—a difficulty which is aggravated when the term "government intervention" is highly charged with emotional significance for those who mistake the objective reality behind it for a convenient embodiment of their own political fads and prejudices.

Many critics of state intervention shelter, unconsciously perhaps, in the lingering shadows of economic liberalism to deny positive economic functions to a government. Their views are often based on an incorrect reading of classical economics and on a convenient disregard of economic history. To circumscribe the economic role of the state by invoking Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill is to do less than historical

justice to either of these men. Mill's doctrine prepared the way for the modern British welfare state, and Bentham's pointed, if somewhat equivocally, towards George Orwell's *1984*; as economists, both are significant not so much because of their advocacy of unlimited individual rights against the encroachment of the state as of their powerful promulgation of concepts which have had the opposite effect.

The notion that *laissez-faire* was ever a dominant political philosophy in England is one of the strangest notions ever conceived about the nineteenth century. During the conflict between the old landed interests and the new manufacturing classes it served as a useful slogan, but it is for the psychologist rather than the historian to explain how the idea of *laissez-faire* survived as a kind of Sorelian myth in an age when even British Toryism was favourable to what would nowadays be described as centralized planning. There must have been a quite vigorous concept of economic and social responsibility when successive British governments during the last century introduced Factory Acts, Poor Law Acts, Railway Regulation Acts, Public Health Acts, the Bank Charter Act, the Limited Liability Company Acts, measures for disestablishing the Church, and for achieving the agrarian revolution which expressed itself in legislation between 1870 and 1903 in Ireland. There is little justification, it would seem, for the view that the British state in the nineteenth century conceived the government's role as that of a benevolent night-watchman; there is certainly no sanction for it in the writings of the classical economists; indeed, if anything, their writings, if read in their context, bear out the contention that "*laissez-faire* is quite literally the only untried Utopia."

In one of his recent works,[1] Professor Lionel Robbins quoted from a review written in 1848 by that most abstract and severe of the classical economists, Nassau Senior. "Is it true," asked Senior, "that governments ought to confine themselves to affording protection against force and fraud?" His conclusion was that the arguments in favour of the principle could not be supported. He is later quoted as asserting that "the only rational foundation of government, the only foundation of a right to govern and a correlative duty to obey is expediency—the general benefit of the community." "It is the duty of a government" he added, "to do whatever is conducive to the welfare of the governed. The only limit to this duty is power . . . ." "It appears to me," he said, "that the most fatal of all errors would be the general admission of the proposition that a government has no right to interfere for any purpose except for that of affording protection, for such an admission would be preventing our profiting by experience, and even from acquiring it."

[1] Lionel Robbins. *The Theory of Economic Policy.*

The justification for reproducing this extract is merely to illustrate the contrast between certain classical precepts and the practices which they are often supposed to have ordained. It is a commonplace that few economists have ever believed as fervently in *laissez-faire* as selections from their writings might suggest. It is all too easy to find ammunition in their works which was directed against the follies and futilities of contemporary governments. Moreover, many of the restraints and restrictions against which they crusaded had been either long since removed or forgotten by the time when, according to the Hammonds, " Adam Smith and Malthus were becoming as familiar in parliamentary debates as Cicero and Virgil." One must distinguish, therefore, between the classical economists and many of their adherents and popularisers, between the theoretical principles enunciated and the application of these principles in a context for which they were never designed. Too often, economic theories fail to achieve public acceptance until the circumstances for which they were framed require quite a different treatment. When this happens the theories are not invalidated ; they have become irrelevant. There is always a tendency to distrust theoretical guidance ; old theories which have served well enough in the past acquire an unchallengeable authority with the passage of the years. An economic theory which is regarded as an unmitigated evil when it is new often becomes an irreproachable guide to public conduct in its old age. To say this is not to deny that, justifiably, there are elements of the inarticulate which are fully entitled to enter all branches of public affairs, or that the world has not suffered from the intellectual excesses of theorists, even of economic theorists. Indeed, the main advances of social progress during the past century had to be achieved in deliberate disregard of what became known as economic orthodoxy, just as it was left to John A. Hobson and some of the " money-cranks " of the twentieth century to prepare the way for the financial doctrines of Lord Keynes. These experiences, however, serve their purpose as warnings against both obstinate obscurantism and doctrinaire cocksureness ; they should prejudice only the timid and the cynics against the value of systematic thought on economic theory and of its application to the framing of public policy.

Although traditional economic doctrines consistently justify the discharge of positive economic functions by government, they also insist on a clear definition of the government's sphere of activity. That sphere may have been too narrow in the nineteenth century ; it varies from time to time according to circumstances. But a positive definition of its scope is no less necessary than positive action itself, for commonsense and painful experience, no less than the history of economic thought, are reminders of the dangers and ultimate ineffectiveness of a reckless transfer of all problems indiscriminately for governmental cure.

II

Some current criticism of state intervention is fully warranted. State activity which is capricious and arbitrary, which adversely effects incentives, risk-taking, business enterprise, is economically stultifying, not because it is state activity, but because it has not been properly designed for the conditions in which it operates, conditions that presuppose a favourable environment for the mechanisms of private enterprise. What is needed is a clearer definition of the present-day economic role of the state. It is idle to pretend that this is primarily a task for the economist. Such a definition involves the making of value judgments for which economic training by itself confers little competence. But it is an even greater error to suggest that the essential neutrality of economic science precludes the economist as such from expressing views as to the ends towards which economic activity can best be directed. This notion springs from the unwarranted assumption that a modern economist should be limited by the political theories that conditioned economic thinking in the nineteenth century. There is neither reason nor need for a modern economist to feel guilty about recommending state intervention when he is satisfied that it provides the best means of legitimately advancing economic welfare. Moreover, an economist has a special competency in recommending social ends towards which the economic resources of a community entitle it to aspire. He need not be apologetic in advocating social reform. The classical economists were often social reformers, and in so far as they were, they departed from the neutrality which the scientist in the laboratory is obliged to observe and from which the economist as an economist must never deviate. When reform demanded less government intervention the classical economists certainly said so. Should desirable reforms to-day require greater government intervention it is surely within the competence of the modern economist to advocate it. But while individuals and private organizations are willing to undertake particular economic and social functions and to discharge them adequately in a manner compatible with the common good, the economist must presume that state intervention is unnecessary as far as these functions are concerned.

Economic freedom was prized by the great classical economists. It animated their writings and inspired their campaigns against the restraints and oppressions of obsolete regulations and the abuse of authority. But their teachings make no sense unless they are read in the context of the theory of law and the function of government then generally accepted. Assumptions which they often took for granted can no longer be accepted. Not even Sir Ernest Benn could suggest to-day that every free contract is a fair one and that consequently

market wages, no matter how low, and market prices, no matter how high, are always in accord with justice.

The modern economist, therefore, has a dual function : he must attempt to contribute to an ever-widening body of theoretical analysis, and he must assist the selection of certain goals of economic policy. The more successfully he performs the first task, the scientific one, the better equipped he will be to undertake the second. A great deal of what comes under the general description of economic thought is quite unscientific in character and must always be so, however much it remains the concern of the economist. These extraneous but necessary interests must never obscure the truth that economic science is not an attempt to generalize human desires or human behaviour, but to generalize the phenomena of price—" the phenomena of scarcity in relation to demand ". Economic science conceives its materials, says Professor Michael Oakeshott, not in human terms of behaviour, action, desire or satisfaction, " but in such quantitative terms as those of cost and price, utility and disutility."[1] Economics is not a science of man or of human behaviour, for these are not scientific concepts. Economic theory, thus narrowly defined, has much to contribute to modern thought and action, but much less than the world often demands. " Plans for eating our cake and having it too are always plentiful " says Michael Polanyi, " and economic theory will always remain the Dismal Science engaged in unmasking such fallacies."[2] Only by recognizing, then, the limitations of the science can the economist help to achieve any effective results. He must depart from its neutrality when he suggests aims of economic and social activity, but if he does not suggest these aims, he may find them stated by persons even less equipped than he is to assess the potentialities of the means available for achieving any aims at all. In its ultimate analysis a theory of economic policy must take its goals from outside economics. The classical writers found criteria for their policies in the principle of utility, which was primarily a philosophical rather than an economic principle ; they tested public policy by its effect on human happiness, and in Utilitarianism were found the highly questionable but convenient presuppositions of much classical economic theory. Most of the nineteenth century economists claimed the absolute validity of Utilitarianism for both economic and ethical conclusions.

Economic liberalism is nowadays little more than a historical phenomenon ; the foundations of many of its economic tenets have crumbled and the political and social ends of the public policy that embodied it are widely rejected. The great depression of the 1930's revealed the

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[1] *Experience and its Modes* by Michael Oakeshott, page 230 et seq.

[2] Michael Polanyi : *Full Employment and Free Trade*, p. 141.

final bankruptcy of a system which based its faith on unlimited competition. The system was ended in the United States when Mr. Roosevelt inaugurated the New Deal : it ended in Britain when total war solved a mass-unemployment problem which had hitherto defied solution. In neither country is there the slightest likelihood of a complete return to the old ways of liberal economic organization, when the private enterprise system was often an excuse for the restrictionism of monopoly and unregulated self-government in industry, when a British milk marketing board disposed of its surplus production by offering to school children at a halfpenny a glass the same milk which cost anyone else a penny and cost the manufacturers of plastic umbrellas half-a-farthing.

The trend towards state-intervention is part of a process which has been operating for a long time ; but the pace has accelerated. Contrary to many popular opinions, governments have not begun to undertake extensive economic responsibilities overnight. The pace has increased because changing economic and social needs and new conceptions of government demanded it, not because scheming politicians or power-hungry public servants have been seeking to tempt us down the road to serfdom. It is unhistorical to suggest that this is a new move toward collectivism, and it is folly to believe that a modern social democracy can be effectively administered if one recognizes only the negative functions of government.

The society in which certain positive economic and social powers are centrally exercised is sometimes described as a " welfare state." The term, however, is somewhat unscientific, because there is no generally accepted definition ; it is also emotive and question-begging like other economic and sociological concepts, such as " utility " or " subsidiarity." The " welfare state " may mean a system in which a government discharges necessary economic and social responsibilities which otherwise may be neglected. But it is often used as a term of censure either by those who are opposed to all but minimal state intervention or to describe the usurpation by a government of functions which if they are necessary at all, can be adequately discharged by individual members of the community for themselves, or by effectively operating subsidiary organizations in society. The New Deal was the first democratic attempt to establish a welfare state concerned with necessary economic and social responsibilities which no other existing institution in society could adequately undertake.

The principles of the Roosevelt experiment were deeply rooted in American history. Since the days of Jackson there had been wide, if far from general, acceptance of the view that if government belonged to the people it could be used to advance the public welfare. This

view was apparent in the political philosophy of both Theodore Roosevelt and Woodrow Wilson, and it became a fundamental concept of the New Deal. Another feature of that programme was the assumption that the national economy required purposive direction if it was to serve the interests of the people as a whole. Public policy had become too important to be left to the businessmen. If subordinate or subsidiary organs were not available or were too weak to operate properly, the state intervened to create or strengthen centrally directed economic and social agencies. The planning of the New Deal became a target for unrelenting criticism, which, indeed, has not yet subsided, although the general structure of Mr. Roosevelt's creation has been preserved.

To argue the necessity for equipping a modern government with positive economic and social powers does not pre-suppose a political choice between a completely planned economy and an unplanned one. It is quite unreal to pretend that such a choice is inevitable. Unrestricted *laissez-faire* never existed ; what some people described as such was really planned *laissez-faire*. The concepts of liberty and welfare are not mutually exclusive. Their reconciliation may present a problem, but the art of politics, unless the resources of its practitioners are wholly exhausted, must find an acceptable solution. The solution which rejects as discredited the unrestricted operation of the profit motive, must avoid, likewise, the other extreme, a state paternalism which by destroying liberty makes a mockery of welfare. No economic argument can justify undue interference with the rights of individuals or private organizations. The difficulty, of course, is to find an acceptable definition of " undue interference." Only an unsound Marxist or a doctrinaire liberal can maintain that there is only one correct form of economic order for all stages of history or only one correct form of administration for all industry. Even the question of private ownership of certain instruments of production cannot be decided *a priori*. The distinguished American economist and sociologist, Rev. John A. Ryan, D.D., of the Catholic University of Washington, wrote that

> Where the line should be drawn between State ownership of industries which is morally lawful and State ownership which encroaches upon the right of private property cannot be exactly described beforehand. The question was entirely one of expediency and human welfare . . . . .[1]

Some industries, then, may have to be controlled by the state, some regulated and some left completely free. The Catholic position was stated quite clearly by Rev. Dr. Ryan :

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[1] Rev. John A. Ryan, D.D. : *The Doctrine of Property* in *Readings in Ethics*, ed. J. F. Leibell, p. 589. Loyola University Press.

> According to the Catholic doctrine, therefore, the right of the individual or of a group of individuals to acquire and hold in private ownership some of the means of production, is in harmony with, and required by, the moral law of nature. . . . Therefore, the State would injure human welfare and violate the moral law if it were to abolish all private property in the instruments of production.
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> However, care must be taken not to exaggerate the implications of this doctrine. All that it asserts is that the institution of private property in some of the means of production is morally lawful and morally necessary ; all that it condemns is the contradictory system which would put the State in the position of owner and manager of all, or practically all, natural and artificial capital.
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> Therefore, the Catholic teaching does not condemn public ownership of what are called public utilities . . . It does not even condemn public ownership of one or more of the great instruments which are not included in the field of public utilities . . .[2]

The best known modern statement of the economic functions of the state occurs in Lord Keynes's pamphlet *The End of Laissez-faire.*

> The state's functions relate not to those activities which private individuals are already fulfilling, but to those functions which fall outside the sphere of the individual, to those decisions which are made by no one if the state does not make them. The important thing for government is not to do the things which individuals are already doing, and to do them a little better or a little worse, but to do those things which at present are not done at all.

The first economic responsibility of a modern government, it may be suggested, must be to ensure that total expenditure within the economy is sufficient to set up a demand for all the workers seeking employment. Private enterprise by itself cannot ensure at all times a demand for all that industry can produce at a price covering costs. Private enterprise alone cannot ensure that money and finance become the servant of the national economy rather than its master. The ultimate responsibility for arranging that private and public outlay together is sufficient to maintain a high level of employment must be taken by the state. The instrument by which the state can influence investment through outlay and maintain effective demand for the productive capacity of the economy is the annual budget. Modern economic analysis of demand demonstrates the conditions in which an unbalanced budget is economically justified : it also demonstrates, and this is scarcely less important, the uses of a budget surplus to combat inflation or to finance investment if sufficient voluntary savings cannot be secured. Budgetary policy

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[2] *Ibid.*

must also concern itself with the balance of payments, for no modern state should permit movements in the foreign balance to cause unnecessary unemployment, deflation or inflation ; the old automatically self-adjusting, self-equilibrating economic universe was precipitated through the successive crises of the 1930's to its own extinction. When a high level of employment and persistent deficits in the balance of payments reveal intense inflationary pressure a budget surplus may be both desirable and necessary. But when large-scale unemployment and emigration persist a temporary budget deficit provides the principal means by which a government can consciously undertake external disinvestment. A budget deficit makes it possible to maintain capital expenditure in excess of current domestic saving, and a deficit in the balance of payments can thus be induced. There is, however, the problem of matching that deficit with a corresponding increase in domestic asset creation. Unless that can be done the foreign assets repatriated may be used merely to boost current consumption at home.

But a government's purposive direction of the economy may require more than supplementing private investment by public investment. When funds are made available by the Exchequer it cannot be assumed that fruitful investment will automatically occur. A high level of demand may not be enough to solve the problem of structural unemployment. There are obvious limits to the risks which private businessmen are willing to undertake even in a highly-protected economy. Private effort may have to be accompanied by direct state intervention if the process of economic growth is to continue. In a period of unprecedented progress in Ireland between 1946 and 1951 the total number of workers in all occupations increased by only 4,000, or an average of about 800 a year ; the rate of emigration at the same time was about 24,400 a year. There may well be methods other than extended state activity of solving the economic and social problems associated with high rates of emigration. Many people may be satisfied with a stationary population and prefer to let emigration continue. If so, well and good, but if not, it is evident that the existing organisation of the Irish agricultural and manufacturing industries cannot provide work for 25,000 additional persons every year. It is not, therefore, a question of whether the state plans or not, but of what kind of planning the state undertakes. At present, for instance, there is reason to believe that intelligent centralized planning could achieve a better balance in the existing state capital programme between socially desirable investment, such as hospitals, and investment that earns revenue directly or indirectly. Until there is real co-ordination of all forms of investment, public and private, it will be difficult to ensure that the nation's resources are distributed to the best advantage between various investment projects.

However essential social improvements may be, the balance of national investment must always be tilted towards what is economically productive.

Public policy can justify the social control or regulation of industries which for political or economic reasons have become or threaten to become monopolies. This is the simplest means of ensuring that the policies of monopolies, whether public utility, or not, such as electricity, gas, railways or milling are in accord with the interests of the people generally, rather than directed primarily towards advancing the interests of private or sectional profit. There must, however, be machinery ensuring that industries, socially owned or controlled, are effectively responsible to Parliament. It is quite proper that both the legislature and the government should be precluded from interfering in the day-to-day activities of such industries, but the present system in Ireland and Britain is quite inadequate as a method of enabling either government or legislature to be really conversant with the policies of state or semi-state corporations.

Few economists would deny that there is a *prima facie* case to-day for bringing credit under effective public control. This does not necessarily mean that all private commercial banking should be nationalized, or that the Central Bank should become altogether the creature of a Minister for Finance. It does mean that the economic independence of a state is impaired if its credit-creating institutions are so organized that credit, a basic national necessity, is created and controlled by private institutions. These institutions may have established their competency to safeguard the deposits of their customers, but their credit-creating powers have grave public implications. No commercial banking system can be regarded as satisfying modern requirements if it can be subjected to government regulation only remotely and indirectly in its exercise of powers that can influence the welfare of the national economy. And there is a wide agreement among many modern economists that unless the interest rate is controlled by a national public authority, the general level of economic activity is liable to be regulated by the blind arbitrament of chance or by the inopportune vagaries of external forces. If the Irish commercial banks decided voluntarily to mobilize for investment in Ireland even some part of their existing liquid reserves, they would effectively disarm a great deal of the criticism to which they are subjected at present and secure wider public understanding on the undoubted problems that face them.

There is all but unanimous agreement amongst economists in regard to monopoly and restrictive practices. These policies have been the result of successful pressure by interested producing or distributing minorities and of the lack of imagination and administrative vitality on the part of the state in the past.

III

The economist need have little qualm about urging the state to extend productive social services when it can afford them. Indeed, it may be that the state cannot afford not to extend them. A modern community will no longer tolerate the arbitrary selection by impersonal economic forces of helpless individuals for immediate punishment without attempting to aid them. The economist is better equipped than most to appreciate how far a community can afford a further redistribution of income because he realizes the economic importance of a high standard of housing, of maintaining and increasing the skill and health of the population and the necessity for directing investment into human capital in the absence of any commercial motive for doing so. He recognizes too, the necessary limits to social services, even productive ones, at any particular time since every economic act involves a choice. The choice, it is hoped, will not again be between guns and butter, but Britain has recently had to choose between free dentures and the restoration of Tudor towers : even Ireland may yet have to choose between milk and butter.

A social policy may be described as a collective term for the public organization of thrift and for public provision for combating the economic insecurity and the debilitating effects of the modern organisation of society. Aspects of such a social policy may justifiably be subjected to criticism ; but other criticism often arises because the real nature of the conditions that demand a state sponsored social policy are inadequately stated or imperfectly understood. The principles of that policy derive from an obligation inherent in a society based on an extreme division of labour, a concentration of property in fewer hands and upon the unmeasured productivities of machines. " When man entered the machine age," says Mr. H. L. Beales, " he created a new division of labour—the vertical division of labour between man and the machine . . . The social policy of late capitalist states has that derivation—it represents a quest for freedom for men, women and children whose lives were becoming nasty, brutish, and short because they were being reduced to the functions, as Samuel Butler put it, of domestic animals attendant upon machines."[1] This view of social policy is rejected by two groups. The first and more important group does not deny the need for a positive social policy. They look with apprehension, however, on the advancing power of the state which they fear may demoralize the individual for whom it attempts to provide social security, removing his incentives and impairing his sense of personal responsibility. They advocate a fundamental reconstruction of society so that conditions might be created

[1] H. L. Beales, *The Making of Social Policy*. L. T. Hobhouse Memorial Lecture, 1945.

in which a comprehensive system of state administered social security would be unnecessary. There is some force in this view when it castigates the state for undertaking functions which can be adequately discharged by existing subsidiary institutions in society, or when it criticizes the state for not creating conditions favourable to the growth of such institutions. But these subsidiary organs are sometimes utopian mirages. The detailed subdivision and specialization of modern industrial society has created an organized web of complementary relations which make each man more dependent on his neighbours than in a society in which no such subdivisions exist. " All progress," writes Karl Mannheim, " is bound up with additional social organization. The division of labour subjects the individual to the social coercion which co-operation entails." The fundamental reconstruction of society contemplated by some critics of state intervention pre-supposes the ability of society as a whole to achieve a degree of perfectibility which, as an aspiration of an individual member for himself they would regard as a romantic illusion.

Many criticisms of state social policies might be avoided if public men were more modest in their claims for their social reforms. In most democratic countries social legislation is, in reality, less extensive than its political advocates suggest or its critics assume. Despite the boasts of British politicians to have provided social security " from the cradle to the grave," all the services of the British " welfare state " made payments in 1952 amounting to no more than $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. of personal incomes generally, against $4\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. in 1938 when social services were unco-ordinated and less extensive in coverage, and when women were not entitled to pensions at the age of sixty.

Responsible Catholic authorities on sociology state as a first principle that state-sponsored welfare schemes must not unduly interfere with the rights of individuals or families or unduly impair personal responsibility and initiative. It is interesting to observe the extent to which the views of Lord Beveridge were in harmony with that principle when he said :

> The term " Welfare state " was unfortunate in that it suggested to many people that responsibility for the welfare of individuals and families rested with the government. The right view was that men must depend for welfare on themselves ; the aim of the Beveridge report was to secure for every one an income both when working and out of work, sufficient to provide the bare necessities of life for the worker and his dependents, leaving the spending of this income as the responsibility of the individual. It also left him to secure by his own efforts income above the minimum.
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> The aim to-day should be not a welfare state but a welfare society, with private enterprise and social reform. Incalculable good was done

by dynamic social reformers in the nineteenth century, and it was hard to picture any one of them as a Civil Servant under the orders of a political Minister. Such people would be needed as much in future, for the twentieth century could not afford to lag behind the last one in voluntary action for welfare.[1]

Some other critics of contemporary state-administered social policy might not unfairly be described as unrepentant economic liberals. The most distinguished of these is probably Professor F. A. Hayek, who declares that " the rule of freedom began to retreat from about 1870 onwards, and a different set of ideas, not really new but very old, began to advance from the East."[2] It should, perhaps, be added that he was referring to ideas of German origin. His remedy is a return to the system of freedom, a dispensing with the need of conscious social control by the state. He admits, it is true, the necessity of unemployment insurance and a minimum of food, shelter and clothing for everybody, but economic liberalism, in his view, offers " freedom from arbitrary or coercive authority " of the state.

Despite these critics, it is now fairly certain that the large measure of social and economic welfare embodied in contemporary public policy in democratic countries will extend rather than recede. Growing responsibilities and obligations will devolve on the governments that make policy and on the civil servants who administer it. The distinction, however, between the creation of policy and its execution is not a clear one. Constitutionally and legally civil servants remain the advisers of their political chiefs, but in reality it is often difficult to separate the making of policy from its enforcement. State sponsored economic and social policy took a long time to develop, but it is no accident that economic and social reform in England in the nineteenth century followed closely on the reform of the Civil Service, and that the first great attempts at social reform remain even more closely associated with a few great civil servants such as Taylor, Hume, Chadwick, than with the governments that decided to undertake them. Indeed, the brunt of the odium for nineteenth century social policy was borne by civil servants. Edwin Chadwick, the architect of the Poor Law of 1834, was so hated that his public life was prematurely ended. Now, over a hundred years later, he is the recipient of eulogistic praise. It has been said of him " His motive was neither religious nor benevolent —it was a horror of waste." One can easily think of some present day Irish public servants who would be satisfied with the same epitaph from posterity.

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[1] Lord Beveridge : report in *The Times*, May 23, 1953.

[2] F. A. Hayek. *The Road to Serfdom*, p. 16 et seq.

IV

In the nineteenth century the Civil Service in Britain and Ireland was responsible mainly for the administration of what is called regulative legislation. Its task was to see that the law was observed and to secure the enforcement of sanctions against those who infringed it. Honesty, integrity and a high sense of responsibility were the outstanding qualities required in the officials who carried out that task. " One of the great advantages which we enjoy in this country," wrote *The Economist* a century ago, " and which, perhaps, more than anything else, gives a free scope to the success of the great constitutional principle, which requires a change in the personnel of the Executive, whenever public opinion, expressed by Parliamentary majorities demands it, is, that in every department of the government there are high and responsible officers, who hold their appointments permanently, and who are safe guides to the Minister of the day, so far as the form and routine of business is concerned." With new methods of recruitment and improved systems of training the public service in Ireland and Britain manifests to-day, in even greater measure than formerly, those virtues for which it was pre-eminent in the latter part of the last century. The civil servant, whatever his private political views, is entirely above party considerations in the discharge of his public duties ; indeed, his private views may often be sublimated into either a benevolent or cynical indifference to what passes for party politics.

Since the state began to take a more active part in economic and social organization, the functions of the civil servant have altered considerably. More than the moral qualities of honesty and integrity are required in a modern civil servant, whose activities extend far beyond the forms and routine of public business. Regulative legislation has not diminished, but constructive legislation has progressively increased. Instead of merely stipulating that the citizen should do or refrain from doing something, the state itself now provides him with services of an economic and social character. This work calls for qualities quite different from those expected of the traditional type of civil servant. To advise a Minister is still the highest function of the most senior civil servant, but to-day the civil servant has additional duties if the accepted functions of government are to be adequately discharged. It is doubtful whether the public service has fully solved the problem of equipping itself with these necessary qualities ; certainly, in Britain, the doctrinal objections of Conservative governments to the positive functions of the state and the attitude of the Treasury—which did little constructive itself—combined to postpone, until it was long overdue, the seeking of a solution to the problem of recruiting staff with the personal qualities, economic knowledge and organizing abilities necessary for discharging the expanding functions of the state.

These qualities exist to a considerable extent in many departments of the Irish Civil Service, although the traditional anonymity of the Service tends often to obscure them. This anonymity enables the Minister to receive honest and forthright advice in a manner that would not be possible if every view expressed by a civil servant were to become a subject of public controversy. It is obviously in the public interest that the anonymous relationship between Ministers and their advisers be preserved. So difficult and complex, however, are the problems of a modern government that the advisers frequently find themselves makers of policy ; a Minister must frequently feel obliged to accept advice not because he has any personal means of testing its correctness but because he relies on the good faith and integrity of his officials, and he is doubly grateful if their views happen to coincide with what happens to be politically expedient.

If democratic institutions are to retain public confidence in an age when public policy is formulated more by those whose proper function is to advise rather than govern, attention must be directed as frequently as possible to the quality of official advice. The Civil Service must continue to be organized so that its officers not merely are models of probity and integrity, but possess also an enlightened approach to problems, flexibility of mind and an awareness of contemporary trends in informed thought, if they are to discharge satisfactorily the heavy responsibilities that are imposed on them. The detachment and objectivity of the civil servant, however necessary, cease to be virtues if they be permitted to degenerate into an obstinate and hidebound adherence to notions which may be as obsolete as the mammoth and the dodo.

Few people outside the Civil Service have any satisfactory notion of what public administration really is, and still fewer could provide an acceptable definition of it. But the more extensive the functions of government become, the more the educated public feel entitled to be informed of the considerations of which public servants take account when preparing the submissions on which governments base policy decisions. In Ireland, the Land Commission is outstanding in enlightening the public on such matters, but many other Departments are regretably silent. Countries which participated in the last war have published selections of documents from their archives, but the Department of External Affairs is still protecting its most common-place file as if it contained the sole surviving copy of the title-deeds to a private utopia. The Departments of Agriculture and Industry and Commerce have disclosed little to facilitate a study of the administration of war-time food and fuel production, rationing, price-control and related matters ; the British Government, on the other hand, has already published many

excellent volumes of a civil history of state departments and their activities during the war. Each volume contains the rubric : " The authors of the Civil Histories have been given free access to official documents. They and the editor are alone responsible for the statements made and the views expressed." The investigator of Irish administrative history, however, has no such assistance to rely on if he seeks the departmental considerations that determined, say, the structure of social welfare, health or hospital building schemes ; Ministerial statements explain the policies, but all records of the quality of official thought that led to these policies remain in the arcanum.

There are, of course, some critics who maintain that a government department is a collective mind, an organization in which " there is little place for the sort of individual adjustment of accepted categories which constitutes thought in a properly intellectual field."

> The adjustments, and the associations and dissociations, which are made are made to suit the necessities and opportunisms of action and not to fit the truth which, in any philosophical sense of that term, is irrelevant. " The practical man," to quote J. B. Yeats, " cannot afford to be sincere." He must, not only on all questions of value but even on matters of fact, share the provisional delusions of his fellows. It is a discipline, but it is not a discipline of the truth. It requires the muscles and obedience of an acrobat rather than the patience of a philosopher.[1]

From this somewhat cynical view the essential character of public administration is a process of maintaining the political structure of the state intact by " yielding to the governed enough to keep them quiet and not enough to damage irreparably the fabric of the state."

> The administrator steers what may appear to be a craven course among the various pressures of public and still more of semi-public opinion and the opinion of groups, and his concern is to come off with victory, not in the sense that his opinion prevails, for he has no right to one, but in the sense that at the end he is still upright and the forces around him have achieved a momentary balance . . . There is no need for the administrator to be a man of ideas. His distinguishing quality should be rather a certain freedom from ideas; the idealisms and the most vicious appetites of the populace are equal before him.[2]

It would be easy for intelligent public servants to adopt this conception of their rôle, to look through departmental windows and see people as objects to be " administered." But the good official is a public servant first and an administrator afterwards ; and if he is even slightly acquainted with the Irish character he knows that any confusion between

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[1], [2] *The Nature of Public Administration* by Philonous. *The Cambridge Journal*, April, 1953.

the two rôles would lead not to an administrative paradise but towards a comically grotesque parody of the worlds of George Orwell and Arthur Koestler.

The public have no right to penetrate the anonymity of Civil Service advice, but to protect himself no less than to inspire public confidence the civil servant must recognize the necessity for revealing the quality of the thought that informs public policy. The public have no right to be interested in the legitimate secrets of the civil servant, but the civil servant is doing little to serve his own cause if, obscuring alike both facts and principles, he turns the public service into a vast arcanum which inevitably becomes a target for prejudiced and stupid criticism. Without committing either indiscretion or confusion the Civil Service could devise many channels for revealing the quality of its thought to educated public opinion. By securing such an audience it could demonstrate that its " authority proceeds from right reason, not the other way round." A great deal of unnecessary and uninformed criticism of the public service is avoided in Britain because educated opinion finds in responsible newspapers and periodicals views on current affairs that display an understanding of the problems and difficulties of government departments. It is not suggested that the approach of, say, *The Times* or *The Economist* is officially inspired, but it is certain that there are methods by which misunderstandings of official thought and action are removed. It may, therefore, be surmised that the senior civil servants in Britain appreciate the value of discreetly co-operating with the moulders of public opinion. There can be no doubt that public confidence in the administrative machinery of the state and in the capacity and judgment of its personnel would be immeasurably strengthened if the facts and considerations on which policy decision are based were frankly and fully disclosed to the public by means of an extended system of Departmental White Papers or otherwise.

These considerations have a close bearing on the positive functions of a modern government, for it is the executive process that produces the most serious criticisms of public policy. Sometimes the criticisms may be warranted, but generally, as has been well said, " the urge to ' shoot the man at the piano ' often arises not so much from the demerits of his performance as from dislike of the tune." Many of the old complaints, when carefully examined, are little more than excuses for mischievous and often malicious propaganda ; the soulless bureaucrat doing bad acts and obstructing good ones ; the inverted Micawbers of the Treasury always waiting for something to turn down ; the flatulent obscurity of official prose ; the departmental graveyards of bright ideas—all these are criticisms which might equally be directed against any other profession, and indeed would be so directed if, unlike the

anonymous civil servants, the other professions were not in a position to answer back.

There remain, nevertheless, certain dangers to individual freedom. These are dangers of possibly great gravity and the public should be grateful for outspoken criticism, even if sometimes exaggerated, of the drift. Fortunately, in Ireland there is no shortage of critics who are fully alive both to the presence of such dangers and to their gravity if not checked ; and there has always been sufficient good sense in Irish government departments where the permanent heads themselves may often be taken to be the severest, and certainly the best informed, critics of their own profession. The public may like to encourage zeal among its servants, but for very good reasons, zeal, especially excessive zeal, is a virtue which is looked on with great suspicion by the best civil servants. No purpose is served, however, by describing in such derogatory terms as " bureaucracy " the instrument designed for carrying out the wishes of Parliament. If the Civil Service were deprived of its powers, Parliament would be unable to pass the kind of legislation that modern public opinion requires, that changes in political, social and economic ideas have made necessary and that the present order of society has made inevitable.

In shaping the Civil Service to the satisfactory discharge of its present-day responsibilities, the public may reasonably expect to know how the official mind works and to understand the thought that animates it. The public service must not be permitted to become a Mandarin or hieratic caste remote from the community that it serves. Its higher officers must not permit themselves to become over-burdened with work, so harassed by pressure and pre-occupied by action that they have too little time for serious thought. The intricate and complicated problems of a modern administration may seem to call particularly for the man of energy, forthrightness and determination. Such an official has admirable qualities, but the man whose predominant bent is action is sometimes disposed to act without " wasting " time thinking. The more complex and burdened the administrative machine becomes, the more necessary in the public interest is the higher civil servant whose main duty should consist in thinking, in saying to himself at least once a day : " I am an evil ; am I a necessary evil ? " Such questioning of fundamental issues can be expected only from officials of high intellectual capacity, members of a service which has earned status, prestige and the support of enlightened public opinion. A Civil Service, intellectually and morally strong, provides society with its most effective protection against the arbitrary actions of governments. It is the best safeguard against the treason of the clerks who in so many countries bartered the liberties of the people for the favours of designing politicians.

The success of any public policy depends no less on its intrinsic merits than on the quality of the public service that executes it. In that public service procedure, precedent, protocol, expediency, all have an importance, but it is the intellectual capacity to respond to ideas that best serves the public interest in the end. The civil servant's task is at any time a difficult one ; it will not be lightened if he fails to bring the public closer into his confidence. He is entitled to expect some help in the definition and interpretation of his task from the economist, who recognizes that unless he shirks his own obligations his functions are no less positive in regard to public policy than are those of a modern government. " Economists," said E. M. Durbin, " are the paid ' remembrancers ' of the public conscience." It is their duty, he might have added, to penetrate the platitude, to expose the shibboleth, to preserve the principles that have been tested by time and to try, if they can, to enrich the currency of ideas. Unless constantly nourished by new ideas, public policy becomes a thing stunted and wilted, for as Lord Keynes wrote in his concluding notes to his *General Theory :*

> Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influences, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist. Madmen in authority, who hear voices in the air, are distilling their frenzy from some academic scribbler of a few years back. I am sure that the power of vested interests is vastly exaggerated compared with the gradual encroachment of ideas. Not, indeed, immediately but after a certain interval : for in the field of economic and political philosophy there are not many who are influenced by new theories after they are twenty-five or thirty years of age, so that the ideas which civil servants and politicians and even agitators apply to current events are not likely to be the newest. But soon or late, it is ideas, not vested interests, which are dangerous for good or evil.

The economist, however, must urge the acceptance of new ideas sooner rather than later, for as Keynes said elsewhere : " In the long run we are all dead."

PATRICK LYNCH

Comments on the Foregoing Article

No. 1—by Edward J. Coyne, S.J.
Professor of Moral Theology, Milltown Park, Dublin

The subject of Mr. Lynch's article cannot be done justice to in the limits set to a comment : nor, indeed, can the writer. As a distinguished scholar in economic science and as one who has practical experience of the problems of administering public policy, Mr. Lynch claims more than a few lines for his ideas. But as a teacher and moulder of our future statesmen, politicians, civil servants, administrators, professional men and educated voters, his views deserve the most serious consideration. He himself towards the end of his article speaks of the need of directing attention " as frequently as possible to the quality of official advice ". He rightly exhorts the modern civil servant to " recognize the necessity for revealing the quality of the thought that informs public policy ". He has happily forestalled an *a fortiori* reply to his exhortation, which, of course, is seen to be even more necessary when applied to the shapers of the thought of our youth on economic and other matters, to the teachers who give our future rulers their principles and ideals.

Unfortunately, not only space sets a limit to anything I should wish to say : but in addition I fear I should not talk the same language as Mr. Lynch and many of my most important observations would seem, possibly, irrelevant. He writes : " Economics is not a science of man or of human behaviour, for these are not scientific concepts ". Whatever the reason may be why economics is not " a science of man ", I could not admit that " man and human behaviour " were not scientific concepts. To do so would reduce all our ethics, moral theology, psychology, and social studies to the position of unscientific disciplines dealing with concepts which are not scientific. If these disciplines are merely collections of " opinions " at best, or of guess-work on vague and changing concepts, then they hardly deserve the place they have long held in human learning. One need not be a Platonist out and out to hold that one's time is largely wasted in seeking " opinions " in place of " knowledge ".

For me, man, human nature, is a completely scientific concept, capable of scientific definition, and capable of being the material object of scientific reasoning and methods leading to the establishment of scientific principles and a body of scientific doctrine. Moreover, any scientific social doctrine depends for its validity on the scientific nature of its most important concept, man, human nature, and his behaviour. I should be entirely unwilling to admit that the human mind cannot

reach scientific certainty about a considerable number of conclusions touching on man and human society.

I am, therefore, at a disadvantge in dealing with the particular theme of the exercise of " certain positive economic and social powers " by the state in modern society. I should be inclined to argue this matter from the nature, purpose and destiny of man, and from the origin, nature and functions of human society. I should expect to find some guidance as to the extent and specific quality of the positive economic and social powers of a state, by studying, scientifically, the needs and exigencies of the individual human person and of that special collection of human persons which we call civil society. Such a study should yield some firm principles on which to base policy and actions.

As a matter of fact, my final conclusions might not differ so much from the point of view put forward by Mr. Lynch. He gives, as I understand him, a cautious and qualified acceptance to the growing extent of the exercise of positive economic and social powers by the central authority. Perhaps, it would not be unfair to substitute the word " approval " for " acceptance ". It is easy to agree with him if we give due weight to his qualifications, which are chiefly three.

(i) State intervention requires a " positive definition of its scope " : " the dangers and ultimate ineffectiveness of a reckless transfer of all problems indiscriminately for governmental cure " must be realized and guarded against. One of the great dangers from this direction is that of state intervention being used, outside its legitimate scope, as an instrument of party politics to win votes. But we must have some definite (and scientific) principles to tell us the objective (and " natural ") scope and limits of state intervention in human society. In the opinion of many capable judges, who have had unique opportunities for observing this social phenomenon in various countries, the state to-day is going, very often, far outside its due limits. It is encumbered with burdens that do not rightly belong to it, and it has become submerged and overwhelmed by an infinity of occupations and duties. If it were to free itself from these burdens, it is arguable, at least, that it would carry out with greater freedom, power and success the tasks belonging to it alone, because it alone can effectively accomplish these.

À propos of this, Mr. Lynch has a severe judgment on certain critics of state intervention who seek a " fundamental reconstruction of society " along vocational lines. I cannot but think that Pius XI in calling his Encyclical " On Reconstructing the Social Order and Perfecting It " was thinking of a " fundamental reconstruction " and not merely a superficial or accidental adjusting. Consequently, Mr. Lynch's sentences on page 253 seem over-strongly worded. If read very carefully, as they

should be, their qualifications and reserves are clear : but a casual or careless reading might interpret them as a rejection of the whole idea of a possible remedy for state intervention being found in vocational organizations. Indeed, they might be read as an expression of grave doubt as to the possibility of any great degree of " fundamental reconstruction ". It is perfectly true that some enthusiasts picture subsidiary organs which are sometimes " Utopian mirages ". Mr. Lynch, however, admits " some force " in the pleas that existing subsidiary institutions in society (and there are many, the family, the trade union, the profession, the friendly society, the parish, the municipality) are not sufficiently used, and that the state should not fail to create " conditions favourable to the growth of such institutions ". I should substitute " great force " for Mr. Lynch's " some force ". The " utopian mirages " of some friends of this fundamentally sound policy and programme should not prevent us from seeing the real oases.

As to the " degree of perfectibility " which human society can achieve, we certainly have not yet reached the limit. There may be some of us with " romantic illusions " both about this and about our own perfectibility as individuals. But it is not likely that, in this case, " the best is enemy of the good ". We may keep the " unattainable best " before us as an inspiration and a directional guide, while in practice we seek for the " not-impossible good ". It is not the degree that is important : it is the specific nature of what we consider social perfection : it is the direction in which we know social perfection lies. And we know that it does *not* lie in the direction of centralization of economic and social powers in the state : that its specific nature is something different. Social perfection in human society is not found in maximizing the positive economic and social functions of the state. Rather it is found in trying to bring into play all the intellectual and volitional powers of all the individual human persons who make up society, in giving them more and more opportunities of making their own decisions, shouldering their own responsibilities, acquiring their own experience, using their own skill and wisdom and energy. In this imperfect world, we may have to tolerate the evil of restricting individual human activity in these spheres : but we should recognize that we are tolerating (and limiting as far as is possible) an evil, not pursuing a good. In other words, the social philosophy that I hold teaches that the presumption lies against state intervention, and that, therefore, the burden of proof is on the state to justify its positive economic and social intervention. It can do so in many instances and its right, after this proof, has never been challenged. But the burden of proof is not on the human persons who form civil society to show that the state should *not* intervene : it is for the state to demonstrate the necessity or great utility for the common good of this or that concrete intervention. If

such proof is not forthcoming, if a doubt still remains, the benefit of the doubt should be given not to the state, but to the individual human persons who are the citizens *distributive sumpti*.

Human society is still perfectible : it would be disastrous for us to accept any policy of despair and allow *laissez-faire* to reign in our political and social development. The very grounds on which the intelligent and purposeful intervention of the state in economic matters can be justified, are exactly the same grounds on which society as such should intervene to set a limit to state intervention. A day may come when we shall have a Salazar, who issued " a pronunciamento to stop pronunciamentos ", making an intervention to stop interventions. The citizens of a human society can by the exercise of their intelligence and free will lay down the direction in which their society will develop. We to not believe in any Zukunftsstaat towards which hidden forces are inevitably compelling us. But we must set before ourselves certain ends and certain principles discovered by a scientific study of men and human society, if we are to guide our society in the direction it is meant to go by its Creator.

(ii) The second qualification of state intervention which Mr. Lynch gives is that it should not be " capricious and arbitrary ". With this, of course, I fully agree. Such intervention should be based on and justified by some principle and corpus of doctrine about the origin, function and limit of political authority, which pre-suppose a scientific study of human society. We cannot easily accept expediency, above all purely economic or material expediency, as the sole criterion for judging the desirability of any particular intervention, still less, of course, for accepting a universal rule or practice of intervention.

(iii) The third qualification mentioned by Mr. Lynch is that state activity should not adversely affect " incentives, risk-taking, business enterprise ". Many, however, would think that a state intervention that did not affect these very important economic values had not yet appeared on sea or land, was almost in the realm of " romantic illusion ". However, if such an intervention, in special cases, be possible, it could not be combatted on economic grounds. There might be non-economic values endangered by such an economically good, or harmless, intervention, and these would have to be weighed against the economic or even social values. We always have to ask ourselves two questions : what benefits will positive economic and social activity on the part of the state bring ultimately to the human persons and families for whose sake society exists ? and what price, in other values, must these persons and families pay for these benefits ?

EDWARD J. COYNE

No. 2—by F. C. King, M.A., Barrister-at-Law.
Lecturer in Administrative and Industrial Law, Dublin University

Mr. Lynch's essay is a most valuable contribution to the literature of Irish Political Science. He has had the privilege of studying the development of Irish public policy from the vantage point of an official seat very close to the centre of government. As an academic economist of high repute he brings a trained mind to the problems of which he writes. He believes that the public is entitled to know how the "official mind" works. He may, himself, be reasonably regarded as a distinguished exponent of the official mind, one whose minutes it must have been a pleasure and an education to read. His style is clear, frank and, at times, even forthright, so that there is little danger of his meaning not being fully grasped unless, indeed, he is content that such should be the case. I shall have occasion later to refer to one passage in which he has failed to follow the argument to a definite issue and has left a doubt as to what his conclusion is. He writes on that particular point as if he were drafting a reply to an awkward Parliamentary question rather than as if he were setting forth to elucidate the workings of the official (or economic) mind. Taking the article as a whole, however, what astonishes one is the amount of ground, much of it of first rate importance, which has been covered. This makes the task of the commentator who is confined to a few pages most difficult. It is almost inevitable that he should pass over the areas of agreement almost unnoticed and that he should be forced to over-stress points of criticism and disagreement and thereby place his own views in a wrong perspective.

To avoid misunderstanding, therefore, it seems desirable that I should preface my comments by explaining that, though I am no admirer of state intervention for its own sake, I do not oppose it *à outrance*, because it is a necessity at times. Generally speaking, however, I regard necessity as its only justification. I would agree with Lord Kenyes's view quoted with approval by Mr. Lynch ;

> The State's functions relate not to those activities which private individuals are already fulfilling, but *to those functions which fall outside the sphere of the individual*, to those decisions which are made by no one if the State does not make them.

I have italicized certain words in this quotation and to my mind those are the operative words. Provided the state keeps out of the "sphere of the individual," its intervention is unobjectionable. The contrary is true when it invades that sphere.

One would expect, in an article which pivots very largely on a justification of state intervention and which accepts Lord Keynes's

criterion, to find two issues treated as of fundamental importance: (a) a definition of the sphere of the individual, and (b) a consideration of the all-important question: who is to be the judge where the sphere of the individual begins and ends. I should feel much happier about state intervention if those fundamental issues were settled in advance, as an accepted decision on those points would fix the bounds of government interference, which, if no limits were fixed, would be a menace to the freedom of society. I have read Mr. Lynch's article very carefully to discover what, if any, limits he would place on state intervention but can find nothing definite. The whole tenor of his paper is a justification of still more planning and a castigation of those "who linger in the shadows of a dead and gone economic liberalism" and who would confine the role of government to that of a benevolent night watchman. His criticism is effective as far as it reaches but it is directed too much against the liberal die-hards, now an ineffective and dying minority, and not sufficiently to the thought of those who, while realizing that the state must do far more for its citizens than was thought proper 100 years ago, are also conscious of something hard, arbitrary, unyielding and undemocratic in the nature of state intervention as practised today, something which constitutes a danger to free society if not eliminated and which must, therefore, be purged. For my own part, I have no hesitation in admitting that I would infinitely prefer Mr. Lynch's Victorian night watchman, because he was benevolent, or Shakespeare's easy-going Dogberry with no one to write him down an ass, to the immensely powerful, active and menacing "authorised officers" of today, who may, for example, under the Health Act 1947, break into our homes just to see whether the Act is being contravened or observed.

My criticism of Mr. Lynch's article is that, though he is fully aware of the need of putting limits to "Administratism" he has, unfortunately, made no serious attempt to define those limits. On the contrary, he seems to envisage without dismay the prospect that state intervention and state powers will continue to extend unchecked. In one rather vague passage (the passage I referred to earlier as lacking in conclusiveness) he seems to justify the use of coercion to drive men into modes of cooperation determined by government. How far the compulsion is to go or what forms it is to take he does not indicate, but, judging from his quotation from Nassau Senior to the effect that the duty of the state to do whatever is conducive to the common good should be limited only by its power, it may be that he would allow it to go very far indeed.

Under our present system government through its well disciplined Parliamentary majority is practically the sole begetter of measures of public policy and, by virtue of decisions of the Courts (Fisher *vs.* Irish Land Commission (1948) I.R. 19, and similar cases), it has become the sole interpreter in the execution of its measures of public policy and the

public good. Is the absence of any criticism of this situation in Mr. Lynch's article to be taken as acquiescence in it? Would he also hold that the government should be the sole interpreter of that other important question referred to earlier, viz. what is the sphere of the individual? If so, any limitation of government intervention and power would be purely illusory. This would be a grim prospect. If there is to be a genuine check on state jurisdiction and powers the limits must be clearly and precisely defined by law and the duty of interpreting those limits in particular cases must be imposed on the Courts. Government must never be able to give itself jurisdiction by its own unchallengeable decision that a given matter is one which lies within its sphere.

Mr. Lynch has no opportunity of answering this criticism, as on this occasion I have the last word. He might say, very rightly, that one cannot deal with everything in one short article and that the question of defining the limits of government power and interference is one for another article. That would be a valid answer and I hope that Mr. Lynch will see the necessity of giving us such an article soon, so that his attitude to state intervention can be examined as an integrated whole. Until I know the sphere of state activity and how government powers are to be regulated and defined, I can enter into no alliance with him on the subject of government intervention. No! not even an armistice.

Mr. Lynch has deplored the fact that certain phrases which he has to use—he picks out the phrase "government intervention" for special mention—are highly charged with emotional significance, which makes a dispassionate consideration of his subject more difficult. I believe the interventionists are the chief offenders and that they are less given to arguing their cases on the merits than are the anti-interventionists. They are adepts at identifying public emotions with their own. Whenever they want anything badly it is sure to be "backed up by a strong public demand" no matter how silly it is. Be that as it may, I am at one with Mr. Lynch in desiring that high public policy should not be distorted by emotion. That is one of my main reasons for urging the need for clear definition of the objects to be pursued by government and the powers to be exercised by them. Those objects and powers when legally and precisely defined become matters of law, cognizable by the courts. So long as the objects are vaguely set forth, e.g. "furtherance of the common good" &c., their very vagueness prevents them being justiciable by the courts and they, therefore, remain hazy concepts round which emotion, political passion and confusion will ever rage because they can never be determined by reason, justice or law. Call a vast sphere of social activity by some such title as "economic planning" or "social welfare", lay down one guide to action, "the common good", give the state a roving commission to wander (or trespass) almost at will within that sphere, leave your terms undefined, and you, inevitably,

create an emotional field, emotional because within it natural justice and human freedom are threatened by arbitrary undefined power and this threat creates emotion. If, however, you clearly define government's powers and mark out its legitimate sphere, uncertainty is allayed and emotion is calmed because the rule of law puts an end to the rule of arbitrary power. This is a lesson which is well understood in the United States of America. The American Supreme Court has brought the lesson home to the American government and people in a series of cases culminating in the recent setting aside as illegal of President Truman's seizure of the steel industry in order to impose his own solution of a nation wide labour dispute. The President's case was that he was exercising unwritten emergency powers inherent in his office in order to protect the State. The Court set aside this contention of unwritten inherent powers—Mr. Justice Jackson remarked in that case—

> With all its defects, delays and inconveniences, men have discovered no technique for long preserving free government except that the Executive be under the law and that the law be made by parliamentary deliberations.

It is hardly necessary to point out that one of the most noticeable concomitants of state intervention has always been a flood of government-made law in the shape of orders and regulations which, by no stretch of the imagination, could be considered to have been made by parliamentary deliberations.

Mr. Lynch makes a point of the fact that, throughout the ages, government intervention has been normal in public administration and that *laissez-faire* was merely a transient phenomenon. That is true but it should not be forgotten that it is dictatorship not democracy which has been the normal form of government through the greater part of history. *Laissez-faire* came in and flourished with the growth of democracy and economic liberalism. It faded out under the stress of the first world war with its spate of government regulation and control. Democracy, too, suffered from the shock of the world crisis and its character has altered greatly. Lip service is still being paid to it but people are beginning to realize that genuine democracy is failing and that it is now assuming a counterfeit form which is losing even its power to deceive. Mr. Lynch is well aware that unregulated State intervention may easily lead on to Dictatorship. That is why it is so necessary to think long and earnestly about the changing scope of government before we are cajoled into changes which may lead to the Servile State.

I am sorry I cannot follow Mr. Lynch through the rest of his article. I should have particularly liked to say something about the role of economists in the formation of public policy. Unfortunately, space forbids.

F. C. KING

No. 3—by John O'Donovan, M.A., D.Sc.Econ.
Lecturer in Economics, University College, Dublin

Mr. Lynch has made a valuable contribution to economic and political thought. Government intervention in economic matters is the outstanding characteristic of the modern state. Assuming that it will continue, and be intensified before there is a reaction, he has rendered us a good service by setting out some of the problems it creates for those concerned with public policy. Since there seems to be no possibility of reversing the trend, his plea for serious study of the effects of control of a large part of the country's economy by the state deserves to be supported strongly. We should attempt to understand as fully as possible the most significant facet of economic existence in the modern state. If the problem is left to empiricism and haphazard legislation based often on temporary political advantage, there will be no touchstone against which to test policies and check abuses. Without full comprehension of the effects of legislation and administrative action, civil servants and other officials may take decisions, in apparently small matters, with serious implications for individual rights and with the likelihood of undermining further the generally accepted principles of private property on which our civilization has been built.

Economic matters are very complicated. This is best expressed by saying that many economic problems which can be stated in the form of equations have so many inter-connected variables that they cannot be solved by mathematical processes. If they could be so solved, I should be prepared to go along the planning road sign-posted by Mr. Lynch. But there is no agreement as to the method of approach to the solution of limited problems. Therefore, it follows that any general policy directed towards the solution of a number of problems simultaneously will not be accepted by many administrators and economists. In fact, a general policy of planning is unlikely to be correct because of the complications of the economic system. For this reason, the smaller decisions of individual businessmen in a competitive world are more likely to lead to economic progress. They are tested rapidly in the business world and if serious mistakes are made, those responsible quickly find themselves in financial difficulties. When a semi-state organization makes grievous errors of judgment, it just obtains a ministerial order increasing the prices of the goods or services it produces ! There are thus few or no short-term sanctions in the planned economy. It would obviously be invidious to mention individual cases but there can scarcely be a farmer or industrialist who is not aware, from personal experience, of increased costs created for him by the operations of such bodies. Lest there should be any misunderstanding, it is necessary to emphasize that such unsuccessful semi-state bodies are not numerous in the Republic of Ireland. It is the unconscionable delay in winding them up which calls for adverse comment.

Often those responsible for the administration of them are prepared to admit that they are not a success—although this involves facing up to the serious personal problem of finding alternative employment—long before the political personages responsible for their origin are prepared to admit that a mistake has been made.

To turn to another part of Mr. Lynch's paper, may I suggest that he begs the question of " *laissez-faire* " and the " Welfare State " in nineteenth century Britain. We need be in no doubt about the date of the legal origin of the Welfare State in the British Isles. It was born on the day the Old Age Pensions Act of 1908 came into operation, i.e. on the 1st January, 1909. The nineteenth century Acts he mentions were enacted during a limited part of the century, the bulk of them between 1830 and 1855. I wonder was he conscious of the gap and did he introduce the Irish land legislation as a make-weight? There seems to be little connection between the agrarian problem in Ireland and the " Welfare State." Undoubtedly, it represented the thin end of a wedge which has broadened considerably since in Britain and Ireland. The general public became used to the idea of the state interfering with private property rights previously regarded as invoilable. Surely also, the disestablishment of the Church was a case of the state getting out rather than coming in ! The " Welfare State " is, I am inclined to think, a concept which can be conceived in a reasonably neat way. Having made these criticisms I should like to admit that Mr. Lynch's suggestion is one of the most interesting I have ever read about nineteenth century Britain.

I think Mr. Lynch will not feel in any way aggrieved if I suggest that he accepts almost in its entirety the theory of welfare economics. Everybody accepts part of it to-day. Differences of opinion arise about the extent to which and the rapidity with which the " Welfare State " should be brought into existence. Many Irish people feel that it will not be possible to make further progress along that particular line until there has been a substantial increase in production. In the meantime, readjustments may be possible in the existing social services which would enable new services to be financed within the total present expenditure on social welfare.

Accepting for the purpose of discussion the argument in the last paragraph of page 249, do not the original premise and final sentence taken together justify control of imports ? And if a deficit in the balance of payments is to be induced deliberately, might it not be just as well to set up the control first as last ? In fact, at present the same end is achieved here in Ireland in a different way. The state has reduced the surplus purchasing power of the citizens and so they cannot purchase such a large volume of imported consumers' goods. It has at the same time ensured by the payment of high interest rates for money, that

projects of which it approves can, regardless of their economic or social efficiency, obtain any imported goods required. In these circumstances, a Budget deficit might be present but at the same time some unemployment be created !

The final part of Mr. Lynch's article contains an analysis of the functions of the civil service in Ireland and Britain. On the whole, there is little with which it is possible to disagree. We, in Ireland, have reason to congratulate ourselves on the unselfish service rendered to the community by all grades in the civil service, especially the more senior members who are now retiring. The picture of " the power-hungry bureaucrat " may possibly have some reality in other countries but it has little or none in Ireland. There is a tendency here as elsewhere to indulge in " empire-building " but the end sought by the officials at the summit of the " empire " is usually rather an increase in income and prestige and some relief from an intolerable burden of work, than power. Officials are numerous, however, who know many different methods of " digging-in " to maintain a position once they come to the conclusion that a certain course of action or, more probably, inaction is desirable in the public interest. They may sometimes be mistaken but, if so, the mistake will seldom arise from the intrusion of personal motives into their official work. They are usually correct in the stand they take. During a period of twenty years in the civil service of Ireland, I noticed few bureaucrats who liked power. The bulk of the higher administrative civil servants are abstemious, self-effacing and hard-working to a remarkable degree.

We should beware, therefore, of making the civil service publicity-minded ! The main architects of a white paper or bill can usually be identified but a bill of size is a composite job of work with contributions by all the Departments concerned whereas a white paper is often prepared by a single civil servant. The present anonymity might be more easily shattered here than in Britain if an extensive policy of such publication, were adopted. It may be admitted, however, that, in this as in other matters, there is safety in numbers !

I should like to reiterate Mr. Lynch's concern about the possibility that the higher civil service may become so over-burdened with work that they will " have too little time for serious thought." This is by far the greatest danger to which the public interest here is exposed at present in relation to the civil service. Many of the officials capable of such thought are under constant heavy pressure of current work and it seems likely that their resilience will be sapped if the present condition of affairs should continue much longer.

John O'Donovan

No. 4—by Kevin Quinn, S.J.

We are all " planners " today in that very few of us really expect or even demand that the state's economic role should be confined to that which it held at the end of the nineteenth century or even in the early thirties of this century. Here in Ireland, as in almost every country of the world, men have come to accept greater state direction of and participation in economic life. Such intense activity has, however, made men keenly interested in the following three problems :— (1) Is the state's power of intervention unlimited ? (2) When does it become undesirable ? (3) How can the liberty of the individual citizens be protected from this new found power of the state ?

Mr. Lynch is no doctrinaire advocate of state intervention for its own sake. He sees the problems clearly even if the least satisfactory part of his article is his treatment of the various remedies that have been proposed to meet them. I read with eagerness " what is needed is a clearer definition of the present-day economic role of the state ". Perhaps I was expecting too much in hoping that he would give a definition that would enable one to judge also when the state should *not* intervene. I was disappointed when he merely said that the economist should not " feel guilty about recommending state intervention when he is satisfied that it provides the best means of legitimately advancing economic welfare ". I agree with this statement but I feel that Mr. Lynch has carefully avoided the great difficulties that arise when one tries to translate this statement into practice.

To my mind the most important word in the sentence I have quoted is " legitimately ". I am glad he used it rather than " efficiently "— because a gas chamber, for example, is an efficient way of solving the economic problems that arise from the presence of the aged and the insane. This may seem to be hair splitting but it is important. How does one decide that a certain course is legitimate ? Mr. Lynch would agree that the judgment cannot be passed by the aid of economics alone. He would certainly allow that the positive law of the country in question should have a say in the decision. He would also allow that the legitimacy should be judged by what are called " human rights," such as for example those of Articles 40-44 of our Constitution. Here we are far from the realm of economics, whether theoretical or practical. I hold that the legitimacy should also be judged in the light of the ultimate principles of social behaviour. These are discoverable by human reason from an analysis of human nature and from the lessons of history. Unfortunately these principles seem rather unreal to the ordinary citizens ; while to practical politicians and overworked civil

servants they seem to call for a long-term point of view, a thing which is rarely permitted to either of them.

Similar questions could be asked about the word " best ". There is sometimes a disagreement between the politicians and the economists on the one hand and the sociologists on the other about the best means of securing a certain end. The politican is forced to seek quick results ; the economist by training tends to work out his analysis in closed models. Both of these facts make the economist and the politician more interested in the short term policy than in long-term views. They tend to deal with each case in detail or on what is called " its merits ". The sociologist instead of restricting his attention to the details of a particular measure views it in a wider setting and from the long-term point of view. Hence the frequent reference by sociologists in some recent controversies to " undesirable tendencies " in particular measures. The practical people consider this preoccupation of the sociologist to be unreal and artificial. They take a particular Bill or clause in a Bill and ask " What is there in this against social teaching ? " The sociologist generally has to admit that the thing in question is not directly and of itself opposed to social principles, but he adds a rider that when taken with other developments it is undesirable. His opinion is often dismissed as that of a crank who will not discuss each case on its merits.

Is there any special virtue in discussing each case on its merits ? Professor Jewkes has said :

> There comes a point at which to argue each case on its merits really amounts to not arguing the case at all. If, for example, the State proposes to nationalise some relatively unimportant industry the pros and cons of that particular case may be equally balanced. It may seem highly unrealistic, in the particular context, to raise major issues regarding liberty and the general efficiency of the economic system. And yet a multiplication of such cases may alter for the worse the whole character of the economic and social system . . . . . At what point should we dig in our heels and declare that further infiltration, however minor, will be resisted ? . . . No democratic community can exist save where its members understand the difference between having their hair cut short and having their scalps taken clean off.

Or to put it in another way. It is relatively rarely that a sociologist can point to a particular measure and say that it is against social principles. Instead his is the task of a prosecutor trying to prove his case through circumstantial evidence. He now presents this fact, then that, then the other. No one of these facts taken by itself is sufficient to prove the guilt of the accused ; but when taken together they prove it beyond all reasonable doubt. Many sociologists consider that a

number of recent examples of government intervention in social and economic life will produce harmful results in the future. They have opposed them not because they believe that the civil service is full of scheming bureaucrats, or that they doubt their sincerity or integrity but because they honestly believe that these measures will call for drastic remedies in the future.

Mr. Lynch, unlike some of the recent supporters of state intervention, is frank enough to admit that there are dangers to individual liberty in this increased state activity. In his remark that " part of the difficulty has arisen because legal institutions have been unable to adapt themselves rapidly enough to the conditions created when the state acquires extended social and economic powers " he has come very near to the solution of the problem. I agree that legal institutions should be adapted to meet the new conditions ; but does not the failure to make this adaptation lie largely on the governments? But I should not be content merely with an adaptation of the legal institutions. In former times when the powers of the state were limited, the judiciary was a sufficient and effective check on the legislature. Today something new is required when the powers of the state are far more extensive. Since the government is interfering in social and economic life we require social and economic institutions to act as a check to its power, because the ordinary judicial institutions are not sufficient.

Mr. Lynch has a poor opinion of these social institutions. He has been misled by the idealistic picture painted by some of their advocates. We do not assert that when these institutions are set up humanity will be changed and that the effects of original sin will be banished. We do, however, assert that society will be healthier. Perhaps the following analogy will help. Catholic sociologists paint an ideal of the married state that is very high, but they are not so naive as to believe that every married couple achieve that ideal. Nevertheless, if the institution of marriage were abolished, society would be poorer and socially more unhealthy. Unless we develop social institutions to keep pace with the growing power of the state, society will be poorer socially and economically. Here in Ireland we have an example of such an institution in the Labour Court. The ordinary processes of law were unable to deal with the problems of modern industry and the state had failed in its efforts to regulate wages by Orders, so it set up a Court composed of representatives of the workers and of the employers. This Court is independent of the government and has done very much to promote industrial peace. Could not other institutions be established to deal with some of the problems arising from recent legislation ?

KEVIN QUINN

Authority and Control in a Free Society[1]

by SIR DOUGLAS COPLAND
High Commissioner for Australia in Canada

1. Perspective in Social Science

A LEADING philosopher of our present age, A. N. Whitehead, was concerned that the trend of modern education was preoccupied with intellectual analysis, and that the predominance of science was responsible. " In regard to the aesthetic needs of civilised society," he says, " the reactions of science have so far been unfortunate. Its materialistic basis has directed attention to *things* as opposed to *values*." We may feel that social science cannot altogether command the same respect on grounds of intellectual analysis as the more exact sciences, but it is concerned also with values, and never more so than in this age. It is not concerned with the whole range of human values in a civilized community ; religion, poetry, art, literature, linguistics, music have more claim to our attention, if we wish to regain our perspective on values in a world that has witnessed such startling advances in science and invention as has our own. But it is not unfair to claim that social science focusses much more attention on values than do the more exact sciences, though there is, fortunately, a good deal of evidence in recent years that the scientist himself is aware of the limitations of concentrating unduly on scientific analysis. Professor Herbert Dingle in a recent article in the *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* (August 1951) aptly makes the point when he says: " There is no easier way to construct a completely self-satisfactory philosophy of science than to be ignorant of history, as our own time amply demonstrates." The comment applies with equal force to the social scientist. The social scientist is apt to create disrespect for his own work by claiming too much at times for partial solutions, and by over-simplifying the complex of human relations that renders his work less exact than those fields of study dependent largely on pure intellectual analysis.

2. Revising the Objective : Loss of Economic Optimism

We live in a totalitarian age when, in a moment of crisis, we are prepared to enlarge and trust authority in order to defeat those who would wish to impose their authoritarian order upon us. We do this

[1] The Finlay Lecture, 1953, delivered in University College, Dublin.

because we have sufficient belief in the inherent capacity of a free society to concede control to authority, when all are agreed that the challenge to freedom must be met by a united effort, and yet be able to regain freedom of enterprise, and the adventure of ideas, when the challenge has been successfully met. Total war required that resources should be mobilized for a grand effort, and it is the prerogative of a free society to establish such controls as it thinks fit in the circumstances in which its continuing existence is threatened. But it would be wrong to assume that controls designed to defend a position can be continued indefinitely to the advantage of the community in other circumstances. I participated actively in the instruments designed to meet the challenge of total war by those who believed in totalitarianism as a permanent force in human history, but I respect the judgment of Herodotus. " While the Greeks were despotically governed, they were not superior in war to any of their neighbours, but when they got rid of their despots, they far surpassed them. This shows that in subjection they did not exert themselves, because they were working for a master, but when they became free each individual keenly did his best on his own account." Observe the words " keenly did his best." They connote a social discipline to which few free societies have attained ; the individual cannot do his best in a social order that does not recognize the dignity of the human personality, and we know now that the *laissez-faire* capitalism of the mid-nineteenth century denied to many, perhaps to the majority, the opportunity of developing their latent powers and exercising their rights as citizens of a free world. It was to concede this right to all that restrictions had to be imposed on the few, and that authority and control became an essential feature of a free society. That society is permanent which is capable of reconciling the restrictions inherent in social controls with the full and responsible expression of individual enterprise, and its continuing challenge to accepted standards of social conduct and individual responsibility. Those who believe in control and authority may well pause to enquire whether they have the answer to this dilemma.

There is little doubt that the growth of authority and control in free societies has been accompanied by great progress in production, in living standards, in security against many of the hazards of personal life, and in elevating the status of the individual in the community.[1] The study of poverty by Seebohm Rowntree has recorded a continuous

[1] In the *New Fabian Essays,* Mr. John Strachey claims that in both the United Kingdom and the United States increased productivity and greater stability of employment and output have been in substantial part due to " the shift in the balance of social forces," that is towards some degree of social control over capitalism. Of the United Kingdom he says : " British capitalism has been compelled . . . to devote its productive resources to raising the standard of life of the population as a whole and to developing agriculture in particular," p. 188. In his Fabian lecture, 1950, he could declare of the United Kingdom : " Property no longer equals power and the wealthy are a relatively impotent class in this country."

improvement over the past half-century, until, in the last review dealing with conditions in 1950, the distinguished author could say that poverty had now been abolished in the United Kingdom.[1] Never in the history of a free society have the standards of life of the lower income groups been so high, or the opportunity of the individual to enjoy the fruits of freedom so great as in the modern western society ; nor have the standards of output been so great. In the United States output can be doubled in a generation and a half, thanks to modern techniques and organization, and to a belief in economic progress.[2] The record of other western communities in production, though not as good, is impressive, as all studies made by international agencies since the war have shown. Judged by these standards the state of the free society under the impact of enhanced authority and control would be regarded as entirely satisfactory ; yet there is by no means universal agreement on this among the members of the western community, and the challenge of an alternative social philosophy was never greater in modern times.[3]

The Welfare State is, in fact, faced with the basic conflict between authority and individual initiative, and the tendency of control to stifle a life of adventure. It is not surprising that there is now widespread resistance to extensions of authority and social control, and uneasiness concerning the stability and virility of a society with security as its chief end. To the uninitiated and the high grade technicians,

[1] In the first study in 1899 Seebohm Rowntree found that over 50 per cent. of the people were living below " the needs of human existence." In the second study in 1936 the figure was 18 per cent. and in the third study in 1950 (Rowntree and Lavers : *Poverty and the Welfare State*, 1951) the figure had fallen to the limiting position of less than 1 per cent. The following quotation from a later study, Rowntree and Lavers : *English Life and Leisure* points the contrast between mid-nineteenth century and mid-twentieth century, " Despite the glories of the Victorians, it was probably a thoroughly disagreeable century for all except the eminent, learned and well-to-do," p. 369. Again : " This century has brought a great upsurge of care for the weak and needy in Britain ; for old people, children deprived for one reason or another of their parents' support, mental defectives, indeed all the casualties of civilisation. Poor Smike of Nicholas Nickelby would to-day be classed as ' educationally sub-normal ' ; he would be cared for in a school adapted to his needs, and would be turned into as efficient a person as his capabilities allowed," p. 371.

[2] The recent report of the President's Materials Policy Commission (U.S.A.) estimates that the gross national product of the United States will double in the next 25 years while population will increase by less than 30 per cent. The impact of this on demand for materials from the outside world, and on the economy of the Western World as a whole, is perhaps the most significant single economic force of the next generation.

[3] This is a recurring condition in history. Sir Richard Livingstone reminds us in his engaging lectures on *Education and the Spirit of the Age*, 1952, that the Athens of Plato was foundering on the brink of an abyss, yet " Greek civilisation did not founder, but lasted on, through political collapse, for another 800 years and was the foundation of the aesthetic, moral, and intellectual life, first of the kingdom of the successors of Alexander and then of the Roman Empire." The inspiration to this achievement came first when " Plato gave to his times—and to after times—a clear principle by which men could order their conduct and judge between right and wrong." He saw the necessity for doctrine and devoted his life to producing a doctrine. The free society of to-day, as of all societies in travail, seeks such an all-embracing philosophy. It may come from what Toynbee calls " the learning that comes through the suffering caused by the failures of civilisations," and it may be " the sovereign means of progress." *Civilisation on Trial*, p. 15.

whether in the field of pure science or in the social sciences, these doubts may not be disturbing ; that is merely a reflection of their devotion to intellectual analysis in a narrow field, and their neglect of real values. But if one looks at the literature of the philosopher or the historian, accustomed to look beyond mere technical competence, however skilled, and to see the world around him in historical perspective, doubt about the trend of the free society is the outstanding feature. Thus Bertrand Russell in the Reith Lectures for 1948-49, speaking of one of the dominant motives for control in the modern society, namely the pursuit of security, expresses his doubts in these words : " The problem of the social reformer, therefore, is not merely to seek means of security, for if these means when found provide no deep satisfaction, the security will be thrown away for the glory of adventure. The problem is rather to combine that degree of security which is essential to the species, with the forms of adventure and danger and contest which are compatible with the civilised life."[1] This is a familiar theme of the social philosophers, as witness also Whitehead in *Adventures of Ideas*. But the era of uncertainty has penetrated to the minds of the reformers themselves, who perhaps are nearer the grass roots than the technicians. The *New Fabian Essays* published recently present a striking contrast to the historic first *Fabian Essays*, edited by Bernard Shaw 60 years ago. There was an air of confidence about the first essays ; capitalism was evil and had to be destroyed and replaced by collectivism. There were no limiting factors in the mind of the old Fabian ; all things were possible to those who were strong in the faith.

The New Fabians approach their problem with less faith, with hearts troubled by the pressures of the outside world (foreign policy was not a matter that the old Fabians found it necessary to spend time on), with some reservations about the virtue of the Welfare State and an instinctive fear of the Managerial State. Thus Mr. R. H. Crossman in the *New Fabian Essays* recently published puts the central problem as follows :—

> The planned economy and the centralization of power are no longer Socialist objectives. They are developing all over the world as the result of the Political Revolution, and the process is accelerated by the prevalence of the war economy. The main task of Socialism to-day is to prevent the concentration of power in the hands of either industrial management or the State bureaucracy—in brief, to distribute responsibility and so to enlarge freedom of choice, (p. 27).

The New Fabians offer no convincing line of attack on the next step in social reform, despite the fact that they have, for the most part, been busily engaged in the last six years in taking the first steps along the road of social reform and nationalization as advocated by the pioneer

[1] See Russell : *Authority and the Individual*, 1949, *passim*.

Fabians sixty years ago.[1] Even in Australia " the socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange " has a less resounding appeal to Labour leaders than it had thirty years ago, or has now to the intellectual radical with a little experience of the harsh facts of politics or administration. The founders of the modern social revolution could well say of this generation : " O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt ? "

3. Resistance to Control

This is indeed a question we might ask ourselves. Why is it that the path to glory, so clear to the reformer of half a century ago, is so blurred to us of this generation ? I suggest that the short answer is that we have gone a certain way on the path and we find that it is not all glory. We hesitate because we have lost our economic optimism and are impressed with the difficulty of preserving economic order and equilibrium ; because the world in which we have to tread the path is quite different from the world in which the philosophy of social reform was enunciated ; because in practice administration has not proved equal to the tasks laid upon it ; because the legislature has to grapple with problems beyond the competence of an elective assembly ; because problems of " big government " are bewildering and elusive ; because the technicians have misled us by their undue simplification of complex issues. It is easy to be cynical about these unexpected developments ; not all of them could have been foreseen. I propose to give some facts to support my thesis that in a free society the problems of authority and control are far more complex than the advocates of reform, depending on the exercise of more authority and control, realize. Of course, if one says that complete collectivism is the goal, whatever the social resistances, and that a substantial measure of compulsion is necessary to acquaint the victims with their fate, the problem is resolved, provided the means can be found for enforcing the reformers' will upon the society. Fortunately, there are some examples of this exercise in totalitarianism within the experience of our own generation, and this in itself provides one of the main grounds for doubt and hesitation.[2]

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[1] Mr. C. A. R. Crosland in his essay in *New Fabian Essays* dismisses the following lines of policy as giving the essence of good Socialism :—

(*a*) extension of free social services,
(*b*) more and more nationalization,
(*c*) proliferation of controls, and
(*d*) further re-distribution of income by direct taxation, pp. 53–64.

[2] The present day socialists or reformers may be regarded as " welfarists " pre-occupied with the task of planning on which there is already a vast literature. The " welfarists " devote much attention to dispelling what they regard as an obsolete, historically conditioned, suspicion of power. This is well expressed in Max Lerner's *It's Later than You Think*. For a discussion of the economic issues and some of the broader social issues involved in the Welfare State, Thomas Wilson, *Modern Capitalism and Economic Progress,* and Arthur Lewis, *The Principles of Economic Planning*, are illuminating.

(a) Proportion of Resources in Government

But we need not go to the length of fearing subversive intent in every extension of authority and control. It is sufficient to consider some measure of the present degree of authority to understand why so much effort is spent in a modern community combating the views of those who advocate extension of authority, or the ever-present tendency of governments to assume authority. I have made a simple comparison of the proportion of government revenue to gross national product in 1939 and in recent years in the United Kingdom, the United States and Australia. Before the war the percentages were respectively 17.5, 6.2 and 10.3, whereas recent figures are of the order of 30.0, 17.5 and 22.5. Because of the differences in the scope and functions of governments and of local authorities the figures are not comparable as between one country and another, but they are comparable for each country as between pre-war and post-war. They show a great increase in the proportion of gross product taken by governments. If we went back to the days before the first world war, the movement would be the more startling. It is doubtful if many people would have then thought it possible for governments to take so much of gross product as they now do without completely transforming the structure of a free society. Think of the controversy over the Harcourt budget of 1894 and the Lloyd George budget of 1906, both now belonging to an age that has passed. In 1939 we had our first budget of £100m. in Australia. To-day it is £1,000m. It is because people feel the impact of this change in their taxation contributions, both personally and in their business and professional activities, that they resist higher contributions. At least it may be said that, for the present, the social resistance to higher contributions is a powerful, if not decisive, political force, resisting the extension of the power and activity of government. In Australia some 30 per cent. of the total work force is engaged in government activity, including industries owned and operated by government authority. There is an instinctive fear in a free society of increasing in any noticeable degree the proportion of government employed people, and the promises of political parties seeking electoral favours clearly indicate the strength of this fear, though the promises are rarely honoured.

(b) Devolution of Authority? the Statutory Corporation

The second point to which attention may be drawn is the apparent incapacity of the State to devise a method of administration based upon devolution of authority. The desire of Parliament to have direct control over all activities of the government, and the tendency of the civil service to resist the development of government enterprise outside normal departmental procedures, combine to thwart devolution in such forms

as the statutory corporation familiar in the development of State ownership in the Australian States at the turn of the century. This renders the administration slow, cumbersome and inefficient, while the ever-present voice of parliament inhibits innovation and anything approaching the risk and adventure of true enterprise. This may appear an extreme statement, and there is much to show in the past, and something in the present, to discount it. The statutory corporation was familiar in the early history of State enterprise in Australia and did much in real enterprise to develop water supply and irrigation, land settlement, transport, and power. In due time pressure groups broke down the independence of the corporations in favour of increasing parliamentary control, while the administration came more and more under the influence of the bureaucracy. It is a sad story and is told with great understanding of the issues involved by Sir Frederic Eggleston in *State Socialism in Victoria*. I dealt with the problem in my address to the Harvard Tercentenary Conference on "The State and the Entrepreneur" (Harvard Tercentenary Publications—*Authority and the Individual*). But my theme was that, correctly conceived and appropriately administered, the statutory corporation offered most of the advantages of joint stock and was the appropriate instrument for the development of state enterprise. I may quote a passage relevant to my present argument :—

> In countries where the state or public authority has assumed ownership of an increasing range of industries, it has devised administrative machinery not unlike joint stock. The state now hands over the enterprise to a board or commission with complete powers in internal management and the right of initiative in development, though not necessarily full financial powers. There are many examples already of this machinery, e.g., the Port of London Authority or the State Electricity Commission in my own State of Victoria. There is no reason why the state should choose its board less wisely than the average joint stock company which is controlled by directors selected from the hierarchy of finance found in every modern industrial centre. If the commission has full powers and the untrammeled right of initiative, it should give results not less satisfactory than those of the joint stock enterprise. But where, as in many cases of state enterprise in Australia, Parliament retains the right to plan and develop the enterprise, there is wide scope for mistakes and financial losses. Parliament must delegate its authority, retaining the right to lay down general policy and to call upon its commission for guidance and information. The fear of parliamentary control, itself often irresponsible in industrial enterprises, competes with the social irresponsibility of the entrepreneur in deciding whether an industry shall be state-owned or not."[1]

[1] Joint stock itself in the modern economy is by no means free of some of the dangers that confront the statutory corporation. Its mammoth size involves a great concentration of power that tends to stifle initiative and thwart competition. It creates a bureaucracy of its own. See Berle and Means : *The Modern Corporation.*

Even where the Parliament seeks to safeguard the statutory corporation against the corroding influence of pressure politics, and this is almost a *non sequitur* in practice, the corporation has to face two problems that are not as embarrassing in practice to the joint stock company. The first is publicity. In the nature of things the corporation must do all its planning and conduct its current operations in the full light of day. The second is the control of finance and there are two difficulties here. One relates to the powers that Parliament can delegate to the corporation to raise capital, and the increase in " fixed debt " as opposed to " equity debt " inherent in the expansion of public investment. The other related to the degree to which the State may give power to the corporation to raise capital on its own account, and to fix its own charges for the services it provides. All these problems tend to be solved by sapping the independence of the corporation, and giving Parliament and the bureaucracy a steadily increasing authority. This is not calculated to promote enterprise, for it widens the circle of people who can make or influence decisions without full knowledge of the facts. The inevitable tendency is to lessen the sense of responsibility and to give more scope to ill-informed public opinion. To quote Emerson in his *Essay on Power*—" the multitude have no habit of self-reliance or original action."

It is a remarkable fact that in the radical tendency of intellectual advocacy of state control, the statutory corporation seems to offer much less promise than formerly, so much so in Australia that a distinguished visitor conducting a seminar among a group of leading social scientists found the subject rather a closed book. In the United Kingdom arguments have been advanced by students of political science and by Commissions of Inquiry that departmental control of nationalized industries is superior to independent management, or that it is inevitable that such public activities should be subject to the safeguards that " ministerial responsibility to Parliament alone provides." The free society seems to have been incapable of finding a solution that will reconcile Parliamentary control with the exercise of initiative and responsibility afforded by the semi-autonomous board or commission. The recent tendency of legislation and administration in Australia, especially by the Commonwealth, has been to increase the control of both Parliament and the bureaucracy over statutory corporations.

There is nothing in the conditions of nationalization of industries in the United Kingdom to warrant the belief that a rapid expansion of public ownership is possible without concentration of power at the centre, the unsettling influence of Parliamentary control and the frustrating consequences of bureaucratic administration. These are problems that we hesitate to discuss or to face frankly because their solution implies the virtue of restraint on the part of the elected assembly, the

curbing of the power of officialdom, the concession that variety in public administration is to be preferred to the simpler but stultifying influence of uniformity, and agreement that progress in public enterprise demands the same measure of individual initiative and the same scope for adventure and innovation, at times involving losses, as does progress in private enterprise. The social scientist would command more respect, and contribute more to social progress, if he were to give as much time to devising means of promoting the right of initiative and to fostering the enterprising spirit in all fields of public administration, as he does to defending the right of free speech and freedom of political activity in all circumstances. Extensions of authority and control in a free society depend upon the solution of this basic problem, if the society is to remain free and to enjoy those forms of collective enterprise essential to economic progress and social welfare. In this field of endeavour the social scientist has a heavy responsibility that he has not yet discharged.

(*c*) *Nationalization and Democracy in Industry*

I have dwelt upon the problem of devolution of authority as one of the limiting factors in expansion of reform depending upon the exercise of more authority and control, because it is at the heart of the problem. I must, however, turn to other grounds upon which the free society hesitates to embrace the philosophy of social reform. My third point is related to the second. It concerns the extent to which the operation of industry by the State has contributed to the democratization of industry, to the devolution of authority within the industry, and to the feeling among the persons engaged in the industry that they are participating in a free association for a common end. Advocates of nationalization claimed that at least the basic antagonism between management and labour would disappear when the opportunity for private profit also disappeared. I need not dwell on the extent to which these expectations were not realized. State ownership, despite its advantage in removing the opportunity for private exploitation of labour, has contributed little, if anything, that is fundamental to the improvement of industrial relations that has not also been done at least as well by private enterprise. It would be wrong to say that action and control by the State have not contributed a great deal to improving conditions of work and living standards. I am referring rather to the high hopes entertained by devotees of collectivism that public ownership by its very nature would impart a sense of association in an enterprise for the common good. As such, the basis for co-operation between management and labour would be automatically provided, leading to a devolution of responsibility and the more effective participation by labour in control. This has most emphatically not happened. Labour feels that its loyalty to its trade union, and to other trade unions representing labour as a

whole in public and private enterprise, is its first devotion. It has no special devotion to the nationalized industry or to the State. In its eyes the State, as an employer, has the same virtues and vices as has the private entrepreneur as an employer. Nor is there anything in totalitarian experience to suggest that any Communist regime has made any contribution to the problem, unless the abolition of free trade unions and the practice of incentives by Stakhanovism are regarded as contributions ! So on the ground of giving a man a sense of freedom and adventure in work, the record of control and authority in the free society has been disappointing. Is this another dilemma that confronts the free society ? The Communist avers that it is logically impossible for the social democratic programme with free trade unions, though care is taken not to refer to the trade unions, to produce a satisfactory attitude towards public enterprise. The Communist solution is to suppress or to control the trade unions, so that they become active participators in the cause. The free society has no such obvious solution, though there are signs in the United Kingdom that the trade unions are taking a more positive line on major issues of economic policy and co-operating more actively in promoting higher productivity. On this point the report of a group of unionists sent to the United States by the Trade Union Congress in 1949 is a remarkable document.[1] The problem is to secure active support among the trade unions for a policy of co-operation with management in public and private enterprise, whilst preserving intact the freedom of association on which the trade union movement was established, and the right to fight for higher standards and to strike if necessary.

(*d*) *The Blight of Big Government*

The problem in part turns upon the magnitude of operations in the modern State, and this is my fourth point. We live in the era of " Big Government," but I do not desire to confine my comments on size to government alone. It permeates all phases of economic and social life in the modern State—corporations, trade unions, farmers' organizations, political parties, professional bodies, sport and even religion. It is in part a product of improved communications and transport, in part of the strong movement to urbanization everywhere, in part of the desire to have a national front to press sectional claims with the maximum force. This is certainly something that the pioneer Fabians could scarcely have foreseen. That entertaining work by the chief mail-man of the White House (Ira Smith : *Dear Mr. President*) records that in

[1] *Trade Unions and Productivity*, published by the British Trade Union Congress, 1950. See also Crosland in *New Fabian Essays :* " The crucial problem is the psychology of industrial relations, and the general tone and atmosphere in industry. Statism has provided negative economic satisfactions of the highest order—full employment, high wages, security . . . But it has not given him a new social status nor cured the basic class hostility which stems from his total exclusion from either rights or participation." p. 66.

President McKinley's day the presidential mail reached 100 letters a day. Under Franklin Roosevelt it got up to 150,000 letters per day. The American Commission for the organization of the Executive Branch of the Government (The Hoover Commission) employed 300 people and took two years to produce its report which ran into 38 volumes. This mammoth organization should be likened to the dinosaur of past ages. It is clumsy, slow-moving, inefficient in structure and incapable of rapid response to changing conditions : *Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum.* All countries tend to create a government machine of the same size relative to their population, and it is noticeable that the smaller countries can claim to be more democratic in structure than the larger, whatever concessions may be made to the forms of democracy through elected assemblies on a popular franchise. Parliament becomes incapable of giving time to the mass of business before it, and all sorts of expedients have to be adopted to get through the agenda, including the passage of complicated bills at the end of the session in a few minutes by men who are agreed on one thing only, namely, to get back to their constituencies. As Viscount Cecil remarks, there is a tendency for all British Parliaments to become rubber stamps, such is the pressure on them in a country with an increasing range of government control and ownership.[1] In these circumstances, the power of the bureaucracy is correspondingly increased, and it too suffers from the disease of size. It is a familiar theme and I need not dwell on it. Hilaire Belloc has done it once for all in *The Servile State.* But it is not merely in the sphere of government that size is the enemy of good administration, and of the effective participation of large numbers in the activities of the body concerned. It applies equally in business, trade unions, sporting bodies or social life. The tendency universally is for all administration to become impersonal, and for power to be concentrated at the centre and to be exercised by the relatively few. In a famous passage Lord Acton declared that the federal form of government was to be preferred because it dispersed authority and combined within the one State peoples of different race, nationality, beliefs and interests.[2] But the history of federalism has not supported his thesis in the very countries of large area and population for which it should have been the appropriate means of ensuring good government, and not merely big government. There is, in fact, greater opportunity

[1] *All the Way :* " It is possible that, if present tendencies continue, the legislative power of the House of Commons may diminish. More and more the Cabinet may be the true law-making body. Already the actual divisions on important Bills matter far less than they did, since they are all foregone conclusions," p. 118.

[2] *Essays on Freedom and Power :* " The federal system limits and restrains the sovereign power by dividing it, and by assigning to government only certain defined rights," p. 163. Again, " The co-existence of several nations under the same State is a test, as well as the best security of its freedom. It is also one of the chief instruments of civilisation ; and, as such, is in the natural and providential order, and indicates a state of greater advancement than the national unity which is the ideal of modern liberalism," p. 185.

for the exercise of power at the centre in all forms of administration with large numbers than with small, and the greatest dictator of our time, Stalin, succeeded to his high office because he understood this, and was more skilled in exploiting the opportunities to acquire power than his rivals.

4. The Quest for Security

Other grounds can no doubt be adduced to explain the malaise that has overtaken the free society, but I have said sufficient to indicate that there are, in the free society, forces of great inherent strength that resist the advance of authoritarianism in any form. This is the virtue of freedom ; it has the right to resist. But it equally has the opportunity to accept forms of control and the exercise of authority that are agreeable to mass opinion. This is the danger that confronts the free society. Unwilling or unable to work out the functional relationship that reconciles control with enterprise, authority with initiative, it may emphasise those forms of collective action that confer benefits without the exercise of responsibility. This is best exemplified in the universal quest for security in the modern State. It manifests itself in both urban and rural life. The urban worker wants security of employment, the farmer a guaranteed return for the product of his farm, and both want to be safeguarded against the normal hazards. The modern State has gone a long way in meeting these demands, and there is little doubt that it has also raised the sum of economic welfare in the process. Whether it has raised the sum of human happiness in the process also is a matter for dispute. Bertrand Russell points out in the Reith Lectures that " a secure life is not necessarily a happy life ; it may be rendered dismal by boredom and monotony."

> An Eagle's life
> Is worth a world of crows. (*Troilus and Cressida*)

The greatest manifestations of the human spirit, the most notable contributions to civilization and the most enduring societies were not the product of excessive devotion to security. On the contrary, there is ample evidence from history that the conflict between security and progress presents the free society with its greatest dilemma. On the one hand, the quest for security becomes a dominant political motive creating claims which rival parties compete to meet. There is no solid basis on which it is possible for the legislature to discriminate among the claims, or to consider the effect that widespread provision of security has on enterprise, responsibility and self-reliance, all of them essential qualities for progress in a free society. On the other hand, the tendency is to write down the rewards for risk-taking, for adventure, for innovation and exceptional performance. These two are essential for progress in the free society. Yet it would be ethically wrong and economically unsound not to make social provision against certain risks, but where

is the dividing line between those forms of security that strengthen the free society and those that exercise a corroding influence ?[1]

There is no doubt that the pre-occupation of political parties with security in the past twenty years has been more responsible for the growing power of the State than any other single influence. No political party can ignore it ; the great Liberal Party of the United Kingdom was virtually extinguished because, in spite of its pioneer ventures in the provision of security, it had no philosophy of universal action as did its chief rival, the Labour Party. But popular as is the doctrine of security, it would be a mistake to assume that those who benefit by the redistribution of income in the welfare state, and the safeguards it affords against the normal hazards of life, will welcome extensions of control in other spheres. In providing for security the State exercises little or no authority over those who get the most benefit, and imposes on them little or no responsibility. So that this form of control meets with little resistance from the beneficiaries, but for the contributors it is felt to be part of the blight of authority and control that the expansion of State activity has cast upon their enterprise and rewards. We recall the struggle for free education and the resistances to its cost, but the current provision for security by the modern State far exceeds its expenditure on education. Thus, in Australia, the annual cost to Governments of public education in all forms is £56m., while the cost of social security is approximately £200m. and likely to rise. No political party can afford to ignore the rapacious demands of social security ; every Government has to be persuaded or cajoled into making adequate provision for the expansion of educational services, and the increasing demands for technical and professional training necessary for the growing complexity of the modern economy. Education is now the most constructive ingredient of State action, but after half a century of clearly defined responsibility and of obvious achievement, education is a poor competitor with security in its claims for political favour. The Commonwealth Government spends some £15m. on education and research

[1] The quest for security dominates politics in the free society of to-day, but when seen in its proper perspective in the course of human history, it has contributed little to human progress in the long run. It has unfortunately contributed to the decline of civilizations, though at first adding to the sum of human welfare. Toynbee, in his *Civilisation on Trial*, p. 161, expresses the view that if the future of mankind in a unified world is to be a happy one there will be " a future in the Old World for the Chinese, and in the island of North America for the *Canadiens*." Neither of these people has paid much attention to security but there are other reasons for Toynbee's view. I may mention one. Both societies place great stress on family obligation whereas the free society of the west seeks increasingly to make the State the *pater familias*. A modern writer (Rosita Forbes) makes a North African Sultan say of western civilization : " You give a man safety, but you take away hope " (*El Raisuni*, p. 77). It is a familiar theme but as we learn from history that we learn nothing from history, it is well to be reminded of it. If we could embody into our way of life some reasonable provision for security without impairing that restlessness of spirit that carries us forward to new horizons, the free society would be enriched. As I see it at the moment, it is unfortunately more likely to be attenuated. As Macbeth has it—

> And you all know, security
> Is mortal's chiefest enemy.

at the higher level, while the States make grants of less than £5m. as a whole to universities. This total of £20m. represents a little more than .5 per cent. of national income, but the cost of child endowment for the first child, conceded as an election promise in 1949, is £15m. Who can doubt that such a sum spent on higher education and research, or on raising standards in the teaching profession would bring more permanent benefit to the community? It may be argued that the country can afford social security and education on the right standards as well, but it is security that has the political appeal, and education that requires the determined efforts of its devotees and supporters to ensure that it is not unduly neglected.

So we return to the question of values. In 1821 in *Defence of Poetry* Shelley wrote:

> We want the creative faculty to imagine that which we know; we want the generous impulse to act that which we imagine; we want the poetry of life; our calculations have outrun conception; we have eaten more than we can digest. The cultivation of those sciences which have enlarged the limits of the empire of man over the external world has, for want of the poetical faculty, proportionately circumscribed those of the internal world; and man, having enslaved the elements, remains himself a slave.

How much more pungently do these words apply to-day! It may be a comfort to know that refined souls entertained the same doubts then as they do to-day, but that has always been so. Go back to the Athens of Plato, who could say this of politics—"When I considered the type of men engaged in politics and the condition of the laws and of morality, the more difficult appeared the task of good government. Traditions of conduct and the observance of the law were degenerating with surprising rapidity." These words have a familiar ring, as do all such judgments throughout history. We who have been endowed with the literature of the Bible and of Shakespeare should have perspective in these matters, but it may well be asked whether any generation has sinned more than our own in making extravagant claims for the solution of the complex problems of man in society that have remained insoluble throughout the ages. There is much to be said for Bertrand Russell's reminder that the intelligence of man has not increased for 500,000 years, though his accumulated store of knowledge has vastly expanded and his techniques dramatically improved. Certainly, the scientist has moved with increasing confidence in his conquest of nature. In doing so he has intensified the problems of social change, of the structural adjustments of the free society to rapid advances in techniques, and of the distribution of welfare made possible by these advances. One wonders whether a civilisation like the Chinese that inherently resisted the intrusion of modern technology into its ancient structure

was not the more perspicacious. Will it absorb the new techniques in due course without undue damage to its traditional social pattern? Or will it, under the influence of a totalitarian philosophy more devoted to technique than is the free society itself, go the way of all flesh and fall a victim to the cult of technological progress at all costs?

We cannot blame the scientist for this, though we may deplore his excessive claim for reason, experimentation and analysis as the qualities of mind that give enduring satisfaction. What responsibility has the social scientist in the matter? A recent writer, D. W. Brogan in *The Price of Revolution,* notes that the idea of revolution is now rather fashionable, not only among the peoples of misgoverned and backward countries who may need it as a remedy, but among the younger Western intellectuals as a platform or parlour game. The scientist has perhaps sinned more than others in this respect. His training and experience and his achievements have all combined to drive him forward to simple solutions of complex questions. After all, it is not much more than half a century ago that the atom was regarded as the final indestructible particle of nature! But the social scientist should not be led into such heresy. It is his business to know that man in society is by far the most complex problem confronting the human mind, that the ideal solution has so far evaded human endeavour, that history repeats itself in presenting to an unsuspecting world the very dilemma that now faces the free society of the western world, that the challenge of totalitarianism with its devotion to authority and control offers no solution, though it may succeed in destroying or submerging freedom for an era. The free society now faces a challenge from without by forces less refined but more confident of their solution, and a challenge from within by the forces of doubt, uncertainty and declining faith in the capacity of the free society to solve the problem. It is perhaps not surprising that this internal challenge should arise in the older societies of Western Europe where prospects of expansion are now dimmed, and that it should find expression in certain extravagances of social conduct and restrictive legislation. What is so disturbing is that it should arise also in the more vigorous societies of the New World where there are still worlds to conquer.

5. Ultimate Social Values

Governments may and do turn with confidence to the scientist to produce solutions of the technique of man's control over nature. This is because within the limits of scientific achievement the physical or biological scientist operates on the classical function of science—explanation and prediction of happenings. Judgment, and especially moral judgment, does not enter into the problem; nor is the scientist, in his professional capacity, concerned with the social consequences of his new

techniques. He is concerned with ideas and things, not men, and still less with men in their community relationships. These are the more difficult, the more intangible problems, and the more elusive. They are subject to *ad hoc* solutions by political expediency. The social scientist has not acquired the *mana* of the physical and biological scientist and for very good reasons. His solutions, if any, are partial, incomplete and sometimes misleading for a complex issue, whereas his colleague in pure science produces a solution for a much more simple and tangible problem, or quite confidently says that science has no solution on its present achievement. The difference is partly in the complexity of the problem and partly in the scope for judgment, and the play of prejudice, emotion and basic political belief. It is a poor foundation on which to claim prescience. *Quot homines tot sententiae ; suus cuique mos.* Speaking for the branch of social science on which I have some knowledge I may quote Sir Alexander Gray in his Presidential Address to Section F of the British Association, 1949 :

> At its best Economics is designed to disclose a means to the attainment of some end, to the realisation of some way of life, some vision or some ideal. It is for Ethics (we hope) to tell us what the good life is, what justice and equity are, what sort of an existence we ought to try to provide for ourselves and others—if it comes to that, how we ought to behave to each other, a question which not infrequently has curious economic infusions. But those who are concerned with the means can hardly be denied the privilege of having some views on the end. It is, indeed, only in so far as we take some part in the ethical debate that our Economics can acquire a meaning, an inspiration and a driving force. If you ask me to fix a just wage, you must allow me to have some ideas about "justice."

But he later says in the same address :

> Doubtless, it is at all times difficult to make sense of this world ; yet I suppose it is what we are all trying to do. And unless we are prepared to regard ourselves merely as a company of irresponsible idiots dancing in the void, we must frame for ourselves, if only as a working hypothesis, some sort of view of the kind of cosmos which we inhabit, and of the manner of its governance.

What is the kind of cosmos the social scientist presupposes when making judgments on social problems and on what grounds does he arrive at his view ? One might ask whether, as an expert in one particular field only, he is much better equipped than is the pure scientist to make basic assumptions on the sort of world that is best for mankind. But this postulate is essential for the social scientists ; it presents no real problem for the pure scientist, though he may be deeply concerned about it. The problem is solved for all in the totalitarian world, and perhaps that is one of the reasons why some social scientists work on

the basic assumption that more control, more authority, is to be preferred to less.[1] This is demonstrated in my own subject, economics, in some of the more extravagant claims for planning. Fortunately, the main body of economic theory has resisted the intrusion of doctrines based upon an extravagant exercise of control and authority. No doubt a similar controversy can be discerned in other branches of social science.

6. Responsibility of the Social Scientist

I have no ready solution to offer for this somewhat confused state of affairs. I sympathize with the plea of E. F. M. Durbin, " Until we have found some real determinants of social behaviour, and as long as the separate specialisms are running away from each other at such a break-neck speed, some kind of intellectual co-operation is vitally necessary."[2] We are establishing in the Australian National University at Canberra a School of Social Sciences. Will it produce a social philosophy for Australia within which the social scientists can work in sympathy and understanding with the aspirations of the Australian people? To ask such a question is to pose again the basic problem of authority and control in a free society. I have sought to show that the society resists extensions of authority and control ; that this is the limiting influence on social transformation. But are we, as social scientists, to accept the view that the present degree of authority and control offers a suitable framework in which to preserve the best that the free society can achieve? Some of us will want more and some less, and I fear that, in the light of political trends, those who want more will be on the side of the angels. But I suggest that it would be highly desirable to call a halt, to allow an opportunity for the community to digest what it has already accepted or had imposed upon it in the way of authority and control.

The social scientist has a special responsibility to give leadership to the community in attacking the basic problem posed in these pages, and it is appropriate that the exponent of the more exact sciences should recognize the nature of the problem. It is probably more important that it should be solved than that new and disturbing discoveries should be made in the physical and, to a less extent, the biological sciences. But the social scientist will not be able to discharge his responsibility in the matter unless (*a*) he clears his own mind on the basic social structure he thinks desirable and enduring, and (*b*) he greatly improves his

[1] It is also the basic reason why the totalitarian world offers no solution of the basic problem we are discussing. As Pitt in one of his speeches has it : " Necessity is the plea for every infringement of human freedom. It is the argument of tyrants ; it is the creed of slaves." House of Commons, November 18th, 1783.

[2] *The Economic Journal*, June 1938.

own techniques. The social scientist is far behind his colleague in the natural sciences in knowledge of the facts and in the techniques of mastering such data as he can obtain, as well as in establishing laws of general behaviour. Perhaps this is not altogether his fault ; the resources devoted to social science research are much less than those available to the natural sciences.

Finally, it is for the social scientist to examine the social structure as a whole with the object of adjusting the degree of authority and control to those measures that enable the free society to work efficiently whilst conforming to our ideas of social justice. In my own field the Keynesian revolution of the thirties was an attempt to explore the possibilities of overall monetary and fiscal controls as a way of escape from the more direct controls of nationalization and socialism. The war plunged all western societies into direct economic controls on a large scale and the difficulties of the post-war world have sustained many of these controls in Western Europe and some of the overseas members of the Western World, like Australia and New Zealand. " I know, and all the world knows, that revolutions never go backward," declared W. H. Seward in 1858, when speaking of the great clash that was imminent in the United States. But my point is that the controls we now have, and the authority exercised over us by the modern State, are by no means the product of a conscious and deliberate social revolution ; they are in part so, but in their present form they are the product of war and of special post-war circumstances. They are not altogether indigenous to the social milieu of the free society. As academic men we demand the highest degree of autonomy for our own institutions, the universities and the research organizations. We insist that freedom and enterprise in education and research are inconsistent with a large measure of control from without. Why should we deny to others what we seek for ourselves ? " A great society," says Whitehead, " is a society in which its men of business think greatly of their functions." Let this rule apply to the academic man and the administrator with equal force, and the free society will adjust itself to the degree of control and authority necessary to enable it to function with enterprise and elemental social justice. Let it be said that in this event the measure of authority and control will be less, not more, than it is to-day, and the free society will be the stronger and the more independent. For what it is worth I suggest that the task before the social scientists of this generation is to guide the community along this path, and that, in the belief that less rather than more control is the desideratum, perhaps what Fabricius said of the Eskimos should be our motto—

Sine Deo, domino, reguntur consuetudine.

DOUGLAS COPLAND

Education and the Study of Christian Culture[1]

by Christopher Dawson

THE survival of a civilization depends on the continuity of its educational tradition. A common educational system creates a common world of thought with common intellectual values and a common inheritance of knowledge, which makes a society conscious of its identity and gives it a common memory of its past. Consequently any breach in the continuity of the educational tradition involves a corresponding breach in the continuity of the civilization; so that if the breach were a complete one, it would be far more revolutionary than any political or economic change, since it would mean the birth of a new civilization, or at any rate the death of the old one.

I do not know how far these facts are generally admitted, or whether they would be regarded as a platitude or as a paradox. Certainly I do not think that modern opinion fully realizes the immense antiquity and persistence of the great educational traditions. Perhaps it is easier to see this in the case of the more remote and alien civilizations than in that of our own, for example, in the case of China where the continuity of the Confucian tradition of education and learning has always impressed the Western observer. But I do not think we give sufficient consideration to the parallel phenomenon of the tradition of liberal education in Western culture which is practically as old as the Confucian tradition in China and which has played such an essential part in forming the mind and maintaining the continuity of Western civilization. Only the specialists in classical studies (and by no means all of them) realize the full significance of that great tradition which had its origins twenty-four centuries ago in ancient Athens, and which was handed down from the Latin rhetoricians to the monks of the West, from the medieval church to the humanists of the Renaissance, and from the humanists to the schools and universities of modern Europe and America.

The failure to recognize the importance of this element of educational tradition in our civilization is the more serious because everywhere to-day civilization is being subjected to the growing pressure of revolutionary forces which threaten it with complete disintegration. In the East, above all in China, the issue is a comparatively simple one. There the tradition of an ancient and intensely conservative culture has been

[1] A lecture delivered in University College, Dublin, in May 1953.

violently interrupted by the sudden invasion of a new political order, a new social system and a new ideological doctrine, all of them closely related to one another.

But in the West, the situation is a much more complicated one. Western culture has never rejected change as such. It has given birth again and again to critical and revolutionary movements and it has been strong enough to overcome them and even to profit by them. And so our problem is not that of an alien invasion but rather of an internal revolt and a schism between the divergent tendencies in our own culture.

What makes the present situation different, and more serious than in the past, is that European civilization is suffering from a sense of discouragement and a loss of faith in its own values, such as we have never experienced before.

Now it must be admitted that this reaction is neither incomprehensible nor unjustifiable. For more than a century Western man was inspired by a boundless faith in the absolute superiority of Western civilization and in its inevitable progress to higher and higher stages of social perfection. It was only during the life-time of the present generation that these utopian hopes have been suddenly dissipated by the bitter realities of the two world wars and their sequel. It is true that these disasters have been mainly political and economic. There is little real evidence that the internal resources of European culture, in science and literature and intellectual activity have declined in the catastrophic way in which the intellectual culture of the classical world declined during the later centuries of the Roman Empire. No doubt, the nineteenth century faith in Western civilization and progress was so largely based on material considerations of wealth and power and external expansion, that it was not fitted to cope with the situation which has arisen from Europe's sudden loss of her position of world hegemony.

But the disillusionment caused by the present crisis of European culture is not confined to a reaction against the nineteenth century idolatry of material progress, it also affects the permanent values of Western culture and extends to the even more fundamental tradition of Western Christendom. To some extent this is the inevitable result of the sudden extension of the Western democratic ideology to peoples who in other respects possessed a totally different tradition of culture. The old nationalisms were the children of Europe. They all shared the same background of Western culture and Christian moral traditions. But the new nationalisms of Asia and Africa have no such common background. They belong to different cultural worlds, some like China and India of immense antiquity and complexity ; others like the peoples of Africa and Oceania only barely emerging from the darkness of barbarism, but all eager to claim cultural as well as political equality in the new cosmopolitan society of nations.

There is a tendency at the present day to extend the democratic principle from politics to culture. As men are equal in the democratic state, so the peoples should be equal in the international organization of the new world, and if the peoples are equal then their cultures must be equal also. Hence any claim on the part of the ancient world-cultures to possess a tradition of universal validity represents a kind of cultural imperialism which is no less unpopular than the military and economic imperialism of the Great Powers. In its extreme form this idea of "cultural democracy" is obviously inacceptable. We cannot regard the culture of a particular Melanesian people or even of the Melanesians as a whole as in any sense equivalent to the culture of China or India. Nevertheless the tendency to cultural relativism is just as strong among the scholars who have made a lifetime's study of the problems of civilization. We see a striking example of this in the case of Dr. Arnold Toynbee whose whole work is based on the principle of the philosophical equivalence of cultures and who rejects the idea of the unity of civilization as a one-sided simplification of history due to the pride and provincialism of Western historians. The unification of the world by Western civilization is a fact that he does not deny, but it is a purely technological achievement which is entirely independent of cultural and spiritual values. In the new world-unity all the great historic spiritual and cultural traditions will have equal shares. As he writes in a striking passage of his Creighton lecture of 1947[1]: "our own descendants are not going to be just Western like ourselves." They are going to be heirs of Chinese philosophy as well as of Hellenism, of Buddhism as well as Christianity, heirs of Zoroaster and Mohammed as well as of the Hebrew prophets and the Christian apostles.[2]

Thus Dr. Toynbee's historical relativism is not limited to the material and political aspects of culture, it extends even more explicitly to its spiritual traditions. His doctrine of the philosophic equivalence of the different world civilizations is carried further to the theological plane and seems to involve the spiritual equivalence of the different world religions.

II

Now it is obvious that Christians cannot accept this historical relativism when it is carried into the sphere of theology. But is it any more acceptable on other intellectual levels? Philosophy and science also involve objective intellectual values and it is difficult to see how these are to be reconciled with a thoroughgoing historical relativism

[1] On "The Unification of the World and the Change in Historical Perspective," reprinted in *Civilization on Trial* pp. 62-97.

[2] *op. cit.* p. 90.

which leaves no room for any judgment of values as between different civilizations.

It seems clear that we must look for some middle way between the blind faith of the nineteenth century in the superiority of Western culture and the scepticism regarding the ultimate values of Western culture which result from the relativist view of the philosophic equivalence of cultures. From this point of view it is instructive to consider the views propounded by Cardinal Newman in Dublin almost a century ago in his inaugural lecture on Christianity and Letters which is the first of his Discourses on University Subjects.

In this lecture Newman states in the most unequivocal form his belief in the unique value of the Western tradition of culture. After speaking of the multiplicity of human societies and the apparent chaos of the ebb and flow of history, he goes on :

> But there is one remarkable association which attracts the attention of the philosopher, not political nor religious, or at least only partially and not essentially such, which began in the earliest times and grew with each succeeding age, till it reached its complete development, and then continued on vigorous and unwearied, and which still remains as vigorous and unwearied as ever it was. Its bond is a common civilization ; and though there are other civilizations in the world, as there are other societies, yet this civilization, together with the society which is its creation and its home, is so distinctive and luminous in its character and so utterly without a rival upon the face of the earth, that the association may fitly assume to itself the title of Human Society and its civilization the abstract term ' Civilization.'[1]

At first sight this may seem a typical example of the nineteenth century liberal attitude towards European culture with its belief in the unilinear continuity of social progress and its uncritical acceptance of its own standards and values as universally valid. The remarkable thing is that it comes from a man who was the lifelong adversary of Liberalism, and who fully realized the fallacies of the creed of secular progress and the deceptive character of the material power and prosperity of the modern Western civilization.

Moreover, he does not identify the great central tradition of human civilization with Christian civilization or even with the tradition of Christendom. For he goes on to speak of Christianity as the second great social tradition of humanity, analogous to and to a certain extent parallel with the first, but possessing its own independent principles of life and law of development. So that while these two association are never exactly coincident, they occupy approximately the same field in space and time and have continued to co-operate with and react on one another throughout the course of their histories.

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[1] *Idea of A University*, p. 251, cf. the whole passage 250-254.

Now if I understand Newman's thought aright, he believes that his analogy of Christianity and Western civilization is no accident, but a part of the providential order of history. The inchoate world community of Western Culture provided the natural preparation and foundation for the diffusion of the new spiritual society in which the human race was finally to recover its lost unity. It is this Christian philosophy of history that underlies the whole of Newman's doctrine on education. And in fact nothing shows more clearly the relation between these two traditions both in their theoretical independence and their practical co-operation than the history of Christian education. It was the union of the classical tradition of human letters—as represented by the Liberal Arts—with the Christian tradition of religious doctrine, as represented by the faculty of theology, which gave birth to the European universities. More than that, it was the dominant factor in the formation of Western thought and one which no historian of European philosophy or literature or culture can afford to disregard for a moment.

This then is Newman's conclusion: The two traditions are different in origin and operation but their

> heir and successor is one and the same. The grace stored in Jerusalem and the gifts which radiate from Athens are made over and concentrated in Rome. This is true as a matter of history. Rome has inherited both sacred and profane learning—she has perpetuated and dispensed the traditions of Moses and David in the supernatural order, and of Homer and Aristotle in the natural. To separate their distinct teachings, human and divine, which meet in Rome, is to retrogress ; it is to rebuild the Jewish temple and to plant anew the groves of Academus.[1]

Newman's theory has been described by a distinguished teacher at this university as " a philosophy of severance." The passage that I have quoted shows how unjust this criticism is. For, more perhaps than any man of his generation, Newman stood for the principle of unity in education, in religion and in culture. It is true that to-day no one can ignore the schism in Western educational and intellectual traditions. In that sense perhaps we are all of us " philosophers of severance." For the separation which Newman condemned had already taken place and has been going further and deeper ever since. First the Liberal Arts were separated from Theology by the secularization and religious divisions of modern culture. The Reformation rebuilt the Jewish Temple and the Renaissance replanted the groves of Academus. Secondly the science of nature took the place of Theology as the queen of the sciences or rather as Science in the absolute sense. And finally the Liberal Arts themselves have been ousted by the growth of a new series of technical disciplines which have reduced higher education to a jungle of competing specialisms.

[1] *Idea*, p. 265.

III

Newman saw the first and second phases of this process and he makes a very interesting parallel between the temporary dethronment of the Arts by Theology in the thirteenth century and the utilitarian and scientific reaction against classical education which was characteristic of nineteenth century Liberalism. What he did not foresee was that science itself was destined to be dethroned not by a revival of humanism but by the emergence of political ideology as the final authority in the sphere of education and culture. The new totalitarian ideologies have nothing in common with either the Christian or the humanist traditions but they are also no less opposed to that disinterested pursuit of knowledge and truth which inspired the scientific movement of the past three centuries. They regard education as a general technique for influencing human behaviour and science as a series of special techniques which must be strictly subordinated to the economic and military plans of the State.

Now this totalitarian demand for the political control of science and education finds its natural allies in the modern instrumentalist view of science and the disaggregation of higher education into a mass of unrelated specialisms. Since the social importance of science and education have steadily increased while the cultural leadership of Christianity and humanism have diminished, it was inevitable that some other power should be called in to provide the directive element which modern technology itself cannot supply. And where was this power to be found except in the State?

Thus totalitarianism only accentuates a tendency to political control which is inherent in the nature of technological civilization. Even in Western democratic society which consciously rejects the totalitarian solution the element of state control and political direction inevitably tends to increase owing to the fact that the state has taken the place of the independent organs of culture as the paymaster and controller, first, of universal public education, and eventually of higher education and scientific research. Hence it is not surprising that some leading representatives of democratic educational theory, like the late Professor Dewey, go as far as the Communists in their subordination of education to the needs of the political community. In Professor Dewey's view the function of education is not to communicate knowledge or to train scholars in the liberal arts: it is to serve Democracy by making every individual participate in the formation of social values and contribute to what he calls "the final pooled intelligence" which is the democratic mind.

No doubt Dewey's democratic community is not so crudely political as that of the totalitarian ideologies. What he has in mind is not the political organization of the state but the community of popular culture.

But it is no less fatal to the traditional concept of culture since it reverses the natural relation between the teacher and the taught and subordinates the higher intellectual and moral values to the mind of the masses. It is indeed difficult to see on these principles how any of the higher forms of culture could ever have arisen. For even the most primitive and barbarous peoples known to us achieve Dewey's ideals of social participation and communal experience no less completely by their initiation ceremonies and tribal dances than does the modern democratic educationalist with all his elaborate programmes for the integration of the school with life.

The original founder of democratic educational theory, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, who was more consistent than his descendants, might not have objected to my criticism since he believed that civilization was rather a mistake and that the human race would have been better without it. But the modern democrat, like Professor Dewey, usually has a wholehearted and naive faith in the value of modern civilization and he wishes to accept the inheritance of culture while rejecting the painful process of social and intellectual discipline by which alone that inheritance has been acquired and transmitted.

The Christian educationalist who does not share these democratic illusions, but who equally rejects the totalitarian simplification that reduces culture to a political instrument, is therefore faced with two very definite problems—(1) how to maintain the unity of culture in an age of technical specialization, and (2) how to preserve the tradition of Christian culture in an age of secularism.

No doubt the two ancient traditions of Christian theology and classical humanism still remain but they have themselves become specialized studies, which are confined to a comparatively small minority and they no longer dominate the university and the whole system of higher education as in the past. Yet some unifying study is absolutely necessary if higher education is not to be entirely disintegrated into an inorganic mass of technical specialisms.

This need has been strongly felt in recent years in the United States where the development of specialization and utilitarian vocational courses has proceeded further and faster than in Europe. In some American universities there has been for many years now a course in contemporary culture which is compulsory for all freshmen. But I do not feel that a course of this kind really provides the unifying principle that we need. Where a civilization has lost its internal unity, as ours has done, it also loses its intelligible unity and the field of study becomes practically unlimited. For example, the two volumes of sources which are the textbook for this course at Colombia University amount to more than 2,000 pages and they include such diverse material as the Bull *Unam sanctam* and the Communist Manifesto, Magna Carta

and the Weimar Constitution, St. Augustine's views on Original Sin and William James's views on pragmatism ; the Hat Act of 1732 and *Quadragesimo Anno*. No First Year student can possibly absorb such a pabulum. It needs a lifetime to digest it. And the same difficulty stands in the way of all attempts to find the necessary principle of unity in an encyclopædic subject like World History or the History of Science.

The success of the old classical education was largely due to the fact that it limited itself to a single cultural tradition and was able to study it thoroughly. Nevertheless, as we have seen, the classical tradition was not the only unifying element in western culture. The tradition of Christian culture is even more important and reaches far deeper into the European consciousness. For it is this and not science or humanism which was the spiritual bond that transcended the divisions and antagonisms of race and class and nationality and created that society of peoples which was the community of Western Christendom.

Why has this essential factor not received more recognition in our educational system ? No doubt to some extent it is due to the tendency of modern historians to concentrate their whole attention on the development of their own national traditions both political and cultural and to ignore or to take for granted the existence of that wider spiritual community out of which the national cultures have sprung. But this is a comparatively recent phenomenon, and the source of the difficulty is much older. It goes back at least four hundred years and has its origin in the one-sided classicism of the humanist educators who treated the previous thousand years of Western culture as a kind of cultural vacuum which educated men could afford to ignore.

To do this is not only to ignore the value and achievement of Christian culture, it is to destroy the intelligible unity of Western civilization. For it is only in the light of this unbroken tradition that we can understand the nature of Western unity and the spiritual forces which have influenced and enriched the life of all the peoples of the West.

IV

Now it seems to me that it is in the study of this unjustly neglected tradition that we can find that unifying principle which modern education requires. Unlike the new encyclopædic studies of which I have spoken, it is a manageable subject with a clearly defined field of study. Unlike the old discipline of classical studies it has a direct relevance to the modern world and to the needs of men to-day. For although the old order of Christendom no longer exists, we Christians are not a negligible minority, and every Christian, whatever his special vocation and technique, has a general interest in the Christian past and a common responsibility for the preservation of the inheritance of Christian culture.

The main objection to such a solution is that it is impracticable, owing to the vagueness of its terms of reference and the width of its field of study. But as I have said, it is far less vague and indefinite than the new encyclopædic subjects like " modern civilization " or world history which have been actually introduced into university curricula.

No one denies the existence of Christian history, Christian philosophy, Christian literature and Christian institutions. And though these have never been studied as part of an integrated whole in the same way as classical history, philosophy and literature have been, there is no reason why they should not be.

In fact the lack of an integrated study of this kind makes the detailed study of any particular aspect of European culture extremely difficult. For example, it is impossible to understand the development and interrelation of the different European vernacular literatures unless we have studied the common Western tradition of medieval Latin culture by which all the early vernacular literatures were so deeply influenced. This has been fully demonstrated by Dr. E. R. Curtius in his very important book on European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages which was published in 1948. And if his conclusions are not more widely known and have not made a deeper impression on educated opinion, this is because there can be no public for such works so long as the study of Christian culture is nobody's business and finds no place in the curriculum of the modern university.

Nevertheless, it is difficult to exaggerate the educative value of such a study. It opens new avenues of approach to the civilization of the ancient world in which Christianity was born and to the civilization of the modern world which, however secularised it may be, still retains an organic relation to the Christian past. And between the two there stands not the cultural vacuum of a Dark Age of medieval barbarism, but the historic reality of Christendom as a social and cultural unity.

The more deeply the student penetrates into this great religious and cultural unity, the more aware he will become of the essential continuity of Western civilization and of the spiritual dynamism and fecundity of the Christian tradition.

No doubt the development of an integrated study of this kind involves the co-operation of scholars and specialists in many different fields. But the same is true of the old classical education. The school of *Literae Humaniores*, which dominated university studies at Oxford so long and so effectively, was itself a most comprehensive study since it covered the cultural development of the ancient world from Homer to the age of the Antonines and involved a comparatively thorough study of ancient philosophy and history as well as literature.

It is no more difficult in principle to conceive of a unified study of Christian culture which would include Christian philosophy, Christian

literature and Christian history, studied in close relation with one another. In both cases the field of study comprises three successive cultural epochs : first the period of formation—the Homeric age of Greece and the Patristic period of Christian culture ; secondly the classical age—the 5th and 4th centuries B.C. and the 12th and 13th centuries A.D. ; and thirdly the age of transmission and diffusion—the Roman Hellenistic period in the ancient world and the age of the formation of the vernacular literatures and cultures in Western Europe.

From the traditional humanist point of view it will perhaps seem absurd and shocking to regard the great centuries of the Middle Ages as the classical age of our culture. But the more we study Western culture as a whole the more impossible it becomes to accept the valuation of Christian culture which has been the orthodox view of the educated world since the Renaissance. The age of St. Thomas and Dante is more central and more universal than the age of Leo X and Luther or than that of Descartes and Corneille or that of Locke and Dryden. And I think historians are more and more coming to realize the eccentric and one-sided character of the Renaissance theory of culture.

Far more serious however are the practical objections to a study of Christian culture such as I have suggested. I fear it must be admitted that the introduction of a new basic integrative study of this kind is not practical politics. Modern education has become such a vast and highly organized system that the teacher is not as free as in the past to choose his own path—at least that is the case in England and, I believe on the Continent. Nevertheless, we can at least hold it in mind as a goal for the future, and attempt to direct and co-ordinate our studies in this direction. In any case, I believe that it is impossible to overestimate the importance of this problem, for it is only by some such study that we can overcome the schism between religion and culture which began in the age of the Renaissance and Reformation and was completed by the Enlightenment and the Revolution. This schism is the great tragedy of Western culture. It must be solved if Christian culture is to survive. And the survival or restoration of Christian culture involves not only the fate of our own people and our own civilization, but the fate of humanity and the future of the world.

CHRISTOPHER DAWSON

The Ethics of Logical Analysis

by THE REVEREND JEREMIAH NEWMAN,
M.A. (N.U.I.), D.PHIL. (LOUVAIN)
Queen's University, Belfast

IN a previous article I have outlined the anti-metaphysical trend of present-day British philosophy as exemplified principally by Bertrand Russell and A. J. Ayer.[1] I noted, in passing, the ill-effects on ethics and other branches which this current linguistic philosophy would be likely to have. In the present paper I shall delineate its effects on ethics more extensively and make some personal points in criticism of its position.

I

But first of all a word of history regarding the development of the ethical aspect of this philosophy. Even before the advent of logical analysis—or at least before its vogue—British ethical thinking had departed considerably from the traditional mode of approach and exposition. The ethical writings of Sir David Ross in the thirties, for example, while they might well be regarded as a rearguard action on behalf of Kant, could also be regarded as the forerunners of the purely analytical type of ethical thinking which, as we shall see, is common in Britain to-day. What I mean is that they tended to regard moral ideas as phenomena to be analysed, not lights to guide human conduct. In the same way the ethical work of Professor G. E. Moore, while it was a direct bequest from Mill through Sidgwick, had also an affinity with the main stream of present-day British thought. And a thorough understanding of the latter can only be had by seeing its connection with that which preceded it.

The interest in moral analysis may be said to have begun with the publication of Moore's *Principia Ethica* (1903). There were two aspects

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[1] Contemporary British Philosophy, in *Studies*, June, 1952.

to this well-known work. On the one hand it was preoccupied with the analysis of spiritual values, that of moral goodness being well to the fore. In his famous chapter on " The Ideal," Moore set up a kind of aesthetic contemplation of truth, beauty and goodness as the only thing worth while in life. On the other hand his work had a practical aspect. He did not think it sufficient to analyse the nature of the good ; it was vitally necessary to achieve it in action. And so in chapter 5, on " Ethics in relation to conduct," he sought to justify the possibility of general moral rules. But it was the former rather than the latter aspect of his work that had the most influence and that came to be developed. The ideal became divorced from the practical.

To understand this development we must note very carefully that Moore's " Moral Ideal " was a very different conception to that of the British Idealists of the 19th century. The Absolute Idealists, Green, Bradley and Bosanquet, had also written on the nature of the moral ideal. " Ideal Morality " is the title of a chapter in Bradley's famous volume *Ethical Studies* (1876). For them, however, the moral ideal was not other than the realisation of the self. By this they understood something definite and practical. It was moral perfection understood in the sense of the guidance of the will by reason in the actualizing of the duties of which one is conscious. Indeed one of the principal doctrines by which Bradley's ethics was characterized is the doctrine of " My Station and its Duties " (*Ethical Studies*, Essay 5). For Bradley these duties were determined by the social-institutional life in which we find ourselves. The social order is the medium in which each person, in his own proper station, can realise his moral and spiritual possibilities. The Church, the Bar, the Professions, have concrete duties which their members must respect. These lofty ideas on personal conduct were more extensively developed in Bosanquet's writings on ethics and social philosophy. Moore's doctrine of the moral ideal was very different. For him there was nothing absolute about self-realization, no values that are self-evidently true. The apprehension of the meaning of " good " is something intuitive but not of " what things are good". The most that can be said is that value exists in certain states of consciousness which we experience in our personal affection for our fellow-men and in the enjoyment of the beautiful in art and nature. For, while it is true that, extramentally, things possess an intrinsic objective value, they do not acquire value in the highest sense until consciousness, or appreciation of the valuable, is added to them. This is true, in particular, of ethical values. Though it is of the greatest importance to have such values,

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[1] *Principia Ethica*, p. 223.

they are not to be found ready-made ; each man must fashion his own for himself. Moore was very far from being dogmatic. He was distrustful of setting up ideals and values to which everybody at all times should conform. As a result of this even the practical rules of conduct which he sought to justify were very far from being absolute norms. " It is not my purpose," he said, " to prove that any particular answers are true."[1] When he spoke of such rules it was always with the reservation that they only hold, to use Aristotle's phrase, " for the most part". Hence, while he did not repudiate the importance of moral conduct, Moore's tendency, due to his relativism, was towards the avoidance of practical questions in favour of an intellectual analysis and aesthetic appreciation of non-absolute ideals and ethical values. " Evidently this kind of philosophising is eminently liable to be sicklied o'er with the pale hue of thought and gnawed by the tooth of scepticism."[1] If anything it was aesthetics rather than ethics. But it was this aspect of his thought, as I have said, that had the greatest influence.

We get a good account of the impact of Moore's doctrine on the undergraduate life of the period in the second essay of J. M. Keynes's *Two Memoirs* (London, 1949). The interest of the matter justifies extensive quotation. " I went up to Cambridge," says Keynes, " at Michaelmas 1902, and Moore's *Principia Ethica* came out at the end of my first year. I have never heard of the present generation having read it. But of course its effect on us, and the talk which preceded and followed it, dominated, and perhaps still dominate, everything else " (p. 81). By " us " he means a club of young Cambridge undergraduates who later formed the " Bloomsbury Circle". Besides himself it included Lytton Strachey and Leonard Woolf, Clive Bell, R. G. Hawtrey and Desmond MacCarthy. Among these Moore's emphasis on the intellectual analysis of values completely ousted the Absolute Idealist practical, ethical approach as it had been expounded in Cambridge by J. E. McTaggart. " Nothing mattered," says Keynes, " except states of mind . . . . These states of mind were not connected with action or achievement or with consequences. They consisted in timeless, passionate states of contemplation and communion." The appropriate subjects of such passionate contemplation were " a beloved person, beauty and truth, and one's prime objects in life were love and the creation and enjoyment of aesthetic experience " (p. 83) . . . . " There was not a very intimate connection between ' being good ' and ' doing good ' ; and we had a feeling that there was some risk that in practice the latter might interfere with the former " (p. 84).

Keynes, of course, admits that what this group took from Moore " was by no means entirely what he offered us". He had one foot on the

[1] Metz, *One Hundred Years of British Philosophy*, p. 541.

threshold of aestheticism but the other was anchored, if unsteadily, to the general rules of correct behaviour. " It was an important object of Moore's book to distinguish between goodness as an attribute of states of mind and rightness as an attribute of actions. He also had a section on the justification of general rules of conduct . . . . But for the most part, we did not pay attention to this aspect of the work or bother much about it " (p. 95). " There was one chapter of the *Principia* (Keynes is here referring to chapter 5) of which we took not the slightest notice. We accepted Moore's religion, so to speak, and discarded his morals. Indeed, in our opinion, one of the greatest advantages of his religion was that it made morals unnecessary." Though Keynes calls this aestheticism a religion, he says that, at the time, they should have been very angry with such a suggestion. We regarded our approach to values, he says, as " entirely rational and scientific in character. Like any other branch of science, it was nothing more than the application of logic and rational analysis to the material represented as sense data. Our apprehension of good was exactly the same as our apprehension of green, and we purported to handle it with the same logical and analytical technique which was appropriate to the latter . . . . Russell's *Principles of Mathematics* came out in the same year as *Principia Ethica ;* and the former, in spirit, furnished a method for handling the material provided by the latter " (p. 86). In other words, they spent their time dissecting the nature of moral ideals rather than in endeavouring to discover and to practise what is right. Their ' religion ' might better have been called a ' philosophy of moral analysis ' which they covertly substituted for what was traditionally known as ' ethics'. The influence on them of Russell's work is interesting. In my previous article I have pointed out the importance of Russell in the general development of British analytical philosophy. Hence the above reference by Keynes to his influence on Moore's disciples supports my contention that the latter marked the beginning of what today has developed into the ethics of logical analysis.

But the road is long between Moore and A. J. Ayer, between 1903, the year of the publication of *Principia Ethica*, and 1936, that of *Language, Truth and Logic*. It is necessary to examine the intervening period to appreciate fully the continuity between them. The followers of Moore to whom Keynes has referred were, none of them, professional philosophers. Nor, think what they might, was their analysis of values on the strict plane of scientific logical method. The questions which they posed themselves were trivial. Was it better or worse that *A*, who was in love with *B*, and thought that *B* was in love with him, whereas *B* was not, should discover his mistake or continue in blissful ignorance ? Was it better or worse that *C* should be in love with *D*, thinking *D* to be good, whereas *D* was not, than that *C* should not be in love at all ? Such were the kind of questions that interested them. Very soon, however,

philosophers, in the strict sense of the word, began to develop the method of analysis in ethics. In 1921 appeared G. C. Field's *Moral Theory* and *The Meaning of Good* by G. Lowes Dickinson. " What," asked Field, " is Moral Philosophy or Ethics ? " And his answer was that " Moral Philosophy, as here conceived, is a criticism of our moral categories . . . . We are no longer concerned primarily with the question whether, for instance, any particular action is right or wrong . . . . The question that we raise as moral philosophers is, ' What does good or right mean' ? What is the full and true nature of the facts which we indicate by these words ? That is, we are engaged in examining and criticising our moral categories themselves, instead of, as in ordinary thinking, using and applying them in particular cases " (pp. 1-2). But it was Ross's book, *The Right and the Good* (1930), which provided the first instance of the adequate application of such criticism to moral concepts. It was quickly followed by a spate of similar writing by Prichard, Carritt, Joseph and others.

Moore, Ross and these others came to form what has been called the school of Oxford Moralists. Moore, as I have said, was a Cambridge man, as also were some other members of the school. But the majority, including Ross, Prichard and Carritt hailed from Oxford. Hence it was that the name of Oxford became attached to the movement. Something similar happened during the same years in the case of a religious movement which, though started in Cambridge by the American Buchman, and confined at first to Cambridge men such as Glover and Collis, was soon to spread to Oxford and eventually came to be known as the Oxford Group Movement. The Oxford Moralists had no doubts about the objectivity of ethical concepts or the general validity of practical moral judgements. They styled themselves " Objectivists " and " Neo-Intuitionists " so as to be distinguished from the Naturalist ethicians, as exemplified by Durkheim and Westermark, and the Subjectivist ethicians such as Meinong. Naturalism in ethics is the method which reduces all ethical concepts to those of a natural science of one kind or another. The science in question is usually sociology, though attempts have been made at biological reductions. Subjectivism, on the other hand, relates the moral character of actions to the feelings of approval or disapproval which a certain person, or group of people, has towards them. The Oxford moralists gave no support to such views and, from this point of view at least, can be said to be traditionalists. But they departed from tradition very considerably in their ideas regarding the function of the ethician. Previous times had usually regarded him as primarily the teacher of proper human conduct. His purpose included, not only an investigation into the nature of moral ideas, but also the elaboration of a pattern of action to guide man in his various relationships with other beings. This latter function the Oxford Moralists neglected.

Their point of view has been well put by A. C. Ewing who, as Moore was, is a Professor at Cambridge, yet is sometimes classed as a member of the Oxford Moralists' school. Ethics, for Ewing, " is a discussion of what good is, not of what things are good, and it is therefore neither an attempt to commend certain values (good things) nor to give advice on the solution of concrete ethical problems. It is a doubtful point how much the philosopher can do in either direction . . . . (and) . . . . anything he does will not be a direct deduction from the analysis of good."[1] Such analysis was regarded by all the Oxford Moralists as the one and only function of the ethician. They made no pretence at concealing the novelty of their approach. Moore, in his *Principia Ethica*, had already expounded a " Prolegomena to any future Ethics that can possibly pretend to be scientific " (p. ix), and in a later essay on *The Nature of Moral Philosophy* [2] made the critical character of his approach to Ethics even clearer. Prichard, too, as early as 1912, had asked *Does Moral Philosophy rest on a Mistake* ?[3] Their idea was that Ethics had been too practical. It had tended to accept uncritically certain basic moral notions and had concentrated its efforts on applying them to concrete circumstances. They suggested that it should re-examine these notions, such as ' good,' ' right,' ' ought ' and the like, and should analyse more carefully and thoroughly than before the exact content of moral situations. Such analysis was something which might well have been fruitful were it not that it became an end in itself. As the writings of the school during the thirties bear witness, the practical character of ethics was forgotten. Even Moore himself got caught up in analysis, let alone men like Prichard and Ross. In short, they confined the scope of Ethics to what Scholastic manuals call ' General Ethics ' or, sometimes, ' Fundamental Moral Philosophy'.

In point of fact, however, their ethical analysis was very different from traditional general Ethics. This latter had usually included discussions on the end of man, on conscience, law, the virtues, etc. The ethical field of the Oxford Moralists was more restricted. It consisted in asking such questions as what is the meaning of the terms ' right,' ' good,' etc. ? It did not make ethical judgements proper but only such logical, epistemological or ontological statements as ' good means desired,' ' right stands for a non-natural property,' ' ought implies can,' etc. Such was the conception of Ethics of the men of the thirties. They devoted their energy to debating the due subject of ethical judgement

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[1] A. C. Ewing, *The Definition of Good,* London, 1947, p. 212.

[2] G. E. Moore, *Philosophical Studies,* London, 1922.

[3] Essay in *Mind,* New Series, Vol. xxi, 1912.

and the fundamental predicates of such judgements without actually making any such judgements themselves. Their controversies hinged around the definition, interrelation and primacy of three concepts : rightness, oughtness and goodness, and the analytic dissecting of specific moral situations. No account of the ensuing result could better that of an Irish writer at the time : " What is meant to replace general Ethics or the Prolegomena to Ethics slides to the other extreme and becomes an exercise in casuistry. English moralists of the last century were wont to indulge in lofty scorn of the casuistry of the medievals. Their successors of today substitute ' analysis of moral situations ' for ' casuistry ' and give the impression that they have discovered a new science. And in pursuit of that science they indulge in dexterous subtleties and show a childish zest for hair-splitting that outrivals the excesses of decadent medievalism. Even the most eminent of them lose themselves in the mazes of trivial situations."[1] In brief, General Ethics, or Moral Philosophy, became an analytic game, while Special Ethics, or Ethics proper, in the sense of the practical science of morals, was more and more, if not entirely, neglected.

The validity of this criticism will be realized if we adduce an example of the type of procedure to which it is directed. Take the following passage from Ross's *Foundations of Ethics* (Gifford Lectures, 1935-36) : " The word ' right,' when used in a context of moral thought, seems to me to mean very nearly, but not quite, the same as ' obligatory ' or ' what is my duty'. The first point of difference may, I think, be stated thus : In most situations that occur in life, there are a variety of claims on me that I can by my action either satisfy or fail to satisfy. There are, or at least there may be, cases in which any one of two or more acts would completely satisfy these claims, or would satisfy them to an equal extent and to the greatest extent possible. Let there be two such acts, A and B. Then we should agree that in doing either of them we should have done a right act. But we should not in doing either of them have done an obligatory act ; for I cannot be obliged to do act A nor to do act B, but to do either act A or act B . . . . Thus it seems that both the question ' What act is the right act for me to do ' ? and the question ' What is the act which it is my duty to do ' ? are wrong questions ; the first because there may be more than one act which is right ; the second because there may be none that is obligatory, the only obligation being to do one or other of certain acts " (pp. 43-44). Nor is this quotation an isolated example. The various books of the Oxford Moralists and

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[1] Dr. J. McLaughlin, Ethical Values and the Modern Mind, in *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, Vol. liv, No. 26, p. 403.

their still more numerous articles in *Mind* literally swarm with analyses of a like kind.

II

What neither Ross nor Prichard nor the others seemed to realize was that to analyse moral concepts—or to endeavour to do so—is not in itself to moralise. They regarded themselves as ethicians while tacitly ignoring what is more commonly regarded as Ethics. It remained for Ayer, in his *Language, Truth and Logic* (1936), formally to develop the unnoticed implication of their position to the conclusion that Ethics, in the sense of the practical science of human conduct, forms no part of true philosophy at all. It was a corollary entirely in harmony with his main contention that philosophy is concerned with the logical structure of language and that the natural sciences contain the totality of fact. He wrote : " Exhortations to moral virtue are not propositions at all, but ejaculations or commands which are designed to provoke the reader to action of a certain sort. Accordingly they do not belong to any branch of philosophy or science " (p. 103) . . . . " In saying that a certain type of action is right or wrong, I am not making any factual statement, not even about my own state of mind. I am merely expressing certain moral sentiments. And the man who is ostensibly contradicting me is merely expressing his moral sentiments. So there is plainly no sense in asking which of us is right. For neither of us is expressing a genuine proposition " (p. 107). Hence " there cannot be such a thing as ethical science, if by ethical science one means the elaboration of a true system of morals . . . . Ethics as a branch of knowledge is nothing more than a department of psychology or sociology " (p. 112).

Furthermore, even Moral Philosophy, in the analytic sense of the Oxford Moralists' school seemed to Ayer more a dream than a reality. " The fundamental ethical concepts are unanalysable, inasmuch as there is no criterion by which one can test the validity of the judgements in which they occur " (p. 107). In saying this it is more than probable that Ayer had in mind the rather negative results of the Oxford moral analysts. Even a cursory inspection of the philosophical journals of the period will show how great were the differences which separated them. ' Good,' ' ought,' ' right ' and the like were understood in at least a dozen different senses. Many efforts at *rapprochement* were made which could not be said to have ended in anything other than failure. And it had gradually become clear—to some if not to all—that many ethical concepts are fundamental and irreducible and that the result of their analysis

is that they are unanalysable. Such, in reality, was Moore's early conclusion that ' good ' is something unique and indefinable.[1] Ayer simply extended this to the whole range of moral concepts and gave formal expression to what was long the suspicion of many, namely, that Moral Philosophy—in the sense of analysis—was a failure. What two earlier writers said of the ' good ' he would apply to each and every ethical predicate : " When we use it in the sentence ' This is good,' we merely refer to ' this,' and the addition of ' is good ' makes no difference to our reference."[2] " Ethical philosophy," he wrote, " consists simply in saying that ethical concepts are pseudo-concepts and therefore unanalysable " (p. 112). In other words, at the time when he first wrote his *Language, Truth and Logic*, Ayer was of the opinion that practical ethical judgements pertain to the realm of the irrational while the little of ethical thought that is strictly philosophical could be summed up in less than a paragraph.

The logical consequence of such theoretical views could scarcely be other than immoralism in practice. Even the early moral analysts mentioned by Keynes, though they had not reached the stage of formally denying the possibility of a practical ethics, were, in practice, little else than admirers of the good who, in no way, tried to conform their conduct to it. " We entirely repudiated," says Keynes, " a personal liability on us to obey general rules . . . . We repudiated entirely customary morals, conventions and traditional wisdom. We were, that is to say, in the strict sense of the term, immoralists. The consequences of being found out had, of course, to be considered for what they were worth. But we recognised no moral obligation on us, no inner sanction, to conform or to obey " (pp. 97-98). Each had his own moral ideal and held before himself what he regarded as a value. Each, in his own way, contemplated the good, analysed it, but left it in the air. Hence we are not surprised when Keynes tells us that their " pattern of life would sometimes become no better than a succession of permutations of short sharp superficial ' intrigues ' . . . . Our comments on life were bright and amusing, but brittle . . . . because there was no solid diagnosis of human nature underlying them " (p. 102). It should, therefore, cause us even less surprise to hear that Ayer's position, as outlined, entailed immoralism. Confronted with the ephemeralism and dilettantism of the thirties and the practical disregard for genuine ethical conduct, his reaction was to jettison both Ethics and Moral Philosophy. The latter, as it had been developed by the Oxford Moralists, had one lesson alone to teach. It was that the meaning of ' good ' and of ' right ' etc.,

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[1] G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica*, 3rd Imp., p. 10.

[2] Ogden and Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning*, London, 1923, p. 25.

depended solely on the whim of the analyst. There seemed no criterion available by which one could determine which of the many views contained the truth. In short, there seemed no diagnosis of human nature possible on which one could base absolute ethical values. And once the fundamental moral concepts are held to be groundless, the practice of morals becomes equally a matter of whim. If, as Ayer maintains, the statement ' You acted wrongly in stealing that money ' is really no more than the statement ' You stole that money,' expressed in a tone of moral disapproval, and if " there is nothing said here which can be true or false " (p. 107), then there would seem to be little or no reason for striving to be ' ethical ' in one's conduct unless forced to do so by the demands of human society. Outside the range of public pressure ' ethical ' action should be abandoned as the naive conduct of the weak-minded and uncritical. Such a corollary, as might well be expected, was one which Ayer himself did not formally deduce. But that it could have been deduced is pretty clear and it has in fact been deduced by many writers. Professor Joad's charge is perhaps the most incisive. In his fairly recent *Critique of Logical Positivism* (1950) he lists the undesirable practical consequences of that philosophy. Despite anything that its upholders maintain to the contrary, it tends, he says, to the erosion of belief of every kind. In regard to morals, he says that if you destroy the grounds for believing in the objective character of moral values, there is little sense in holding or acting on them at all. Nor is there any alternative psychological stimulant to provoke such conduct, for once ethical values are thought to be merely emotive they immediately lose their emotive significance as spurs to action. The force of dominant purpose in life being thus destroyed there is little left to practise other than opportunism.

Ayer restated his views in the second edition of his book, brought out in the year 1946. In 1949, however, came an important development marking a more balanced approach to the matter with which we are dealing. In a little known essay *On the Analysis of Moral Judgements*, which appeared in the September issue of *Horizon* for that year, Ayer allows the possibility of an extensive Moral Philosophy, analytic in character, and also the practical value of a distinct ethical discipline, non-philosophical, which we would call Special Ethics or Ethics proper. We may note that when he uses the word ' Ethician ' it is the practical normative type he has in mind. He confines the title ' Moral Philosopher ' to the analyst, a usage which we shall find convenient to follow here.

The Moral Philosophy which Ayer now regards as possible of elaboration is analytical in a somewhat different sense from that attempted by the Oxford Moralists. It does not assume, as they did, that ethical ideas

are objective and that the job of the analyst is scientifically to dissect their meaning. Rather is the contrary the case. The very first point of philosophical moral analysis must be that ethical statements are non-factual and meaningless, that they are in fact " not really statements at all " in the true sense of genuine statements. For ethical statements, in Ayer's view, are not open to verification and must, therefore, be regarded as non-factual and non-objective. Hence they fall outside the class of genuine meaningful statements. Rather are they the reflections of moral attitudes resulting from the mode of conduct which one likes to practise. The word ' good,' or whatever other value term may be used, is simply and solely descriptive of such attitudes. Provided it be realized that they are emotive and merely expressive of personal attitudes, the continued use of such words is allowable. But they should not be regarded as genuinely obligatory. That an act is said to have the property of being good, a property whose presence is supported by people's having a particular moral attitude in regard to the act, does not entail that it is preferable to other acts or that it is anyone's duty to bring it into existence. In short, it should be realized that ethical terms, when analysed, are non-normative and merely descriptive of alleged non-natural (*i.e.*, non-objective) properties. It is the task of the moral philosopher thus to analyse and elucidate what the practical, non-philosophical, ethician is really doing when he proposes norms of behaviour for general acceptance. Moral Philosophy studies the ethician's use of words and lays bare the linguistic juggling in which he indulges. Such is its proper field of activity. It is not one which Ayer himself has extensively developed, but the recently published *Language and Morals* by R. M. Hare (Oxford, 1952) provides a good example of the kind of analysis which it involves.

By ascribing a subjective character to ethical concepts and judgements Ayer's views have earned for him the doubtful compliment of having his approach styled the ' Emotive Theory of Ethics'. It is a doubtful compliment because Ayer himself is very anxious to avoid the charge of subjectivism. In *Language, Truth and Logic* he vigorously asserted that he could never agree with naturalism or subjectivism. " We shall not adopt either a subjectivist or utilitarian analysis of ethical terms " (p. 104). The reason for this assurance, I suspect, is the fact that these approaches were far from fashionable in British philosophy at the time. Logically, however, there is very little difference between his emotive view of moral ideas and subjectivism. Indeed he is forced to admit, despite his protestations to the contrary, that his theory " might fairly be said to be radically subjectivist".

So much for Moral Philosophy strictly so-called. What now of the practical discipline known as Ethics ? In his article in *Horizon* Ayer, as I have mentioned, treats Ethics also with more respect than he had done

formerly. No matter what the moral philosopher may discover by his analysing, the moral problems, he says, will always remain. What am I to do? What attitude am I to take? And ethical norms provide directives in regard to them. Though they may, when analysed, prove emotive in character, they have nevertheless an important practical value. In this way he tries to avoid, however unsuccessfully, the charge that immoralism is a corollary of his moral philosophy.

Ayer's position today then is appreciably different from what it was when he was writing *Language, Truth and Logic.* He no longer regards Moral Philosophy as unattainable An analytical Moral Philosophy can be developed, being the study of what underlies moral concepts and of what people are doing when they make ethical judgements and act on them. He regards such a study of the meaning—or lack of meaning—of moral ideas as the true function of genuine Moral Philosophy. It is purely analytic and non-normative in character. " All moral theories, intuitionist, naturalistic, objectivist, emotive, and the rest, in so far as they are philosophical theories, are neutral as regards actual conduct. To speak technically, they belong to the field of meta-ethics, not ethics proper. That is why it is silly as well as presumptuous for any one type of philosopher to pose as the champion of virtue. And it is also the reason why many people find moral philosophy an unsatisfying subject. For they mistakenly look to the moral philosopher for guidance."[1] On the other hand there are the precepts of the ethicians, as well as personal moral opinions and modes of conduct. In regard to these too his attitude has changed considerably. His position today " is not that morals are trivial and unimportant, or that people ought not to bother about them". They have an extensive practical value both from the point of view of the individual and of society. In short, Ayer draws a distinction between the analytical type of Moral Philosophy, which he had found practised by Ross and others in the thirties, and Ethics proper, the practical science of human conduct. And, however much we may disagree with his views on either Ethics or Moral Philosophy, we cannot but welcome his frank exposure of the fact that the unpractical analysing of the Oxford Moralists had in truth, though all unwittingly, abandoned Ethics in the true sense of the word. He has but carried their approach to its logical conclusion.

III

Though he grants that ethical norms have a practical value, Ayre gives us no clue as to how we are to choose between the many principles—

[1] A. J. Ayer, *On the Analysis of Moral Judgements* in *Horizon*, September, 1949, p. 182.

sometimes conflicting—which are proposed to us. He confines his activities to analytical Moral Philosophy, leaving to others the distinct business of deciding as to how our moral attitudes should be formed. Indeed the fruit of his analysis has been, as we have seen, that such a task lies outside the confines of positive factual study. The fixing of moral values may be practical and important, but it is based less on fact than on fancy. Hence it is not the concern of a logical positivist such as Ayer. In my previous article, however, I have mentioned the fact that all analysis does not necessarily involve such positivism. All analysts are not positivists like Ayer ; they refuse to believe that the whole of truth is physical empirical fact. Reason, many maintain, can uncover new vistas of knowledge which are beyond the ken of unaided empirical science. They concentrate on discovering what is the best linguistic form under which metaphysical concepts and statements can be presented. An interesting effort to do a similar service to Ethics has recently been undertaken by Mr. Stephen Toulmin, whose book, *The Place of Reason in Ethics* (Cambridge, 1950), is an attempt to show that normative ethical judgements can rightly be placed within the framework of meaningful language.

Cambridge-trained at the feet of Wittgenstein, Toulmin knows his logical analysis and his book is written after the manner of the current analytic method. It contains an extensive attack on the fallacies of traditional ethical dogmatism and a penetrating account of the critical method of approach. But it is very far from purely negative in character. When all is said and done, says Toulmin, " we still need to know what to do, and we still have to choose between the conflicting courses and arguments with which we are presented " (p. 2) He squarely faces the problem : " Which of all the arguments should we accept ? Which of the reasons are good reasons ? And how far can one rely on reason in coming to moral decisions ? . . . . What in short is the place of reason in ethics ? " (p. 13).

By proposing such questions at all he indicates that, in his opinion, we can solve the problem—how to know what to do in any particular set of circumstances in which we find ourselves. First, he says, we must learn to choose between conflicting arguments, which choice, in turn, will enable us to choose between the conflicting courses of action which they entail. We learn to choose between arguments by learning to recognize which of them really constitutes ' good reasons'. Mr. Toulmin thinks that we can in fact do this by studying what he calls the ' function ' of ethical judgements. The function of ethics is " to correlate our feelings and behaviour in such a way as to make the fulfilment of everyone's aims and desires as far as possible compatible " (p. 137) The greatest happiness of the greatest number is its object. Hence, when we are

wondering about the morality of a particular act, the sort of reason which we should be after is " one which relates the action in question to an accepted social practice " (p. 146). For the way society tends to regard it is a fairly good indication of its good or ill effects on people in general. In this way a moral criterion is arrived at. It is a complete justification for doing something to say, for example, ' I ought to because it is a promise'. For keeping promises is a necessity of social life. On the other hand, if we are wondering about the morality of social practices, it is clear that our answer can no longer be found by appeal to the very practices themselves. Here we have a higher-level question. " The answer to be given will (remembering the function of ethics) be reached by estimating the probable consequences (1) of retaining the present practice, and (2) of adopting the suggested alternative " (pp. 149-50). Throughout, the ideal which the ethician must keep before him " is that of a society in which no misery or frustration is tolerated within the existing resources and state of knowledge " (p. 223).

Toulmin then, in contrast to Ayer, regards ethical judgments as meaningful and scientific. Science, he believes, is manifold, physical science covering only a portion of its field. There are many other sciences beside physical, for example, political, economic and moral. He takes as his guide the common-sense outlook that both ethics and physical science " aim at the discovery of Reality, separate Realities, different aspects of Ultimate Reality, maybe, but Reality nevertheless " (p. 121). Reality in both modes of procedure must be understood as simply that which is relevant. In physical science it is phenomena and their causes ; in ethical science behaviour and its norms. " The function of scientific judgements is to alter one's expectations : that of ethical judgements, by contrast, is to alter one's feelings and behaviour " (p. 130). Both are subject to factual verification, the former by reference to sensory perception, the latter by experience of the satisfaction of desires and interests. " On most occasions it is a good reason for choosing or approving of an action that it is in accordance with an established maxim of conduct, for the existing moral code, and the current institutions and laws, provide the most reliable guide as to which decisions will be happy—in the same kind of way as codes of standard practice in engineering."[1]

Mr. Toulmin's position, on the whole, seems open to classification under the general heading ' pragmatic ' or ' utilitarian'. Yet, just as Ayer strives to avoid subjectivism, though his theory of ethics is really subjectivist, so also does Mr. Toulmin insist that downright utilitarianism

[1] *The Place of Reason in Ethics*, p. 223.

must be rejected. (Cf. p. 195 seq.). Utilitarianism is the doctrine that only those acts are good which conduce to the general happiness of mankind. The greatest happiness of the greatest number is its criterion of morals. This being the case it is difficult to see how a passage such as the following can escape the charge of being fundamentally utilitarian. If the adoption of a practice " would genuinely reduce the conflicts of interests, it is a practice worthy of adoption, and if the way of life would genuinely lead to deeper and more consistent happiness, it is one worthy of pursuit. And this seems so natural and intelligible, when one bears in mind the function of ethical judgements, that, if anyone asks me why they are ' good reasons,' I can only reply by asking in return, ' What better kinds of reason could you want' ? (Toulmin, p. 224).

To this one might reply that it would be much more desirable to have more practical criteria available. Utilitarians, old and new, have found it well-nigh impossible to solve concrete problems by means of the criterion of ' the greatest happiness'. The happiness of mankind is very difficult to quantify and would seem to be impossible to measure with anything like accuracy. And even if one could decide which actions contribute to the happiness of the greatest number, it is very conceivable that they might frequently conflict with what social opinion and even the law regard as wrong. The morality of suicide, of euthanasia and sterilization of the unfit are just a few instances of where differences could easily arise. Common opinion usually regards these acts as wrong, but it is easy to see that cases could arise in which they would conduce to the happiness of the greatest number. I do not imply that the legal code or the opinion of society in themselves provide the ultimate criterion of conduct ; I am concerned only with examining Mr. Toulmin's position. And my point is, firstly, that his criterion of ' the greatest happiness ' is unsatisfactory in practice, and, secondly, that it is theoretically so in that it could sometimes, as even he admits, run counter to its own test, the moral sentiment or opinion of mankind. Such a possibility constitutes a much graver defect than Mr. Toulmin appears to be aware. For though common opinion, in itself, is unacceptable as the criterion of morals, it should never be disregarded merely for utilitarian reasons and may very well provide the clue to the real yardstick which it is so necessary for Ethics to find.

The working of men's consciences may well spring from the application of innate, intuited, first principles of conduct. That such is the case has always been the teaching of Aquinas and the Scholastic philosophers. The principle ' Good must be done and evil avoided ' is as undeniable as those of sufficient reason and non-contradiction. For the human will is necessarily fixed upon the good and man cannot help regarding the good as something which he ought to pursue. But not

only is it self-evident that the good in general must be done ; it is also clear that certain things are good. For, since ' good ' refers to the natural object of human need, it follows that that is good which we desire as being the natural end of any faculty. Thus no man could fail to realize that the desire for food is good and that it is something which ought to be fulfilled. So also, for example, the desire of sex. In other words, it is self-evident to all men that the attainment of the natural ends of the faculties is moral. To this extent ethical principles are intuited. They represent a fund of truth that is immediately grasped by all, but which truth, because of its nature, cannot be proved.

In regard to these first principles of conduct all men at all times are in agreement. Differences of opinion in moral matters arise from the difficulty of applying them to concrete circumstances. For it is clear that even the pursuit of natural goods must be rationally controlled if injury to human nature is to be avoided. The use of all one's faculties indiscriminately is not good. There are certain laws and conditions which must be respected. Now the determination of these laws requires much reasoning. Unlike the first principles they are not self-evident ; they are the application of first principles to particular situations. Such application is sometimes rather difficult to effect and men's consciences, as a result, sometimes differ. The reason for this is that frequently there is a very wide gap separating the first principles from their concrete applications. The more intimately knowledge is bound up with first principles—whether of the speculative reason or of the practical—the more certain it is. One can readily be certain, for example, that a horse is a horse and not a motor car because in this case it is extremely easy to apply the principles of identity and non-contradiction ; everything is what it is and cannot, at the same time, be something else. The further we get away from first principles, the lesser the degree of certitude which we can achieve. It is not easy, for example, to see the connection between any first principle of the speculative reason and Freud's contention that dreams are sex-repressions. So much the worse for the certitude of Freudianism. It is for the same reason that moral science is sometimes uncertain. In many instances it is extremely difficult to see the connection between the first principle of the practical reason ' Good must be done ' and its remote applications in the individual or social orders (Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *De Trinitate Boetii*, q. 6, art. 1).

Yet, though moral principles may be vague and their applications sometimes difficult, this is not a sufficient warrant for rejecting them. The Logical Analysts are striving after a false ideal of clarity, in the name of which they impose an impossible task on philosophy. With profit might they listen to some pertinent remarks of Aristotle. In the

Nicomachean Ethics he says that " it is the mark of an educated mind to expect only that amount of exactness in each kind of science which the nature of the subject-matter permits " (1904 b). Both Ayer and Toulmin offend in this respect. The failure to realize that there are certain self-evident, unprovable, principles of conduct is, I think, Mr. Toulmin's basic error. He views the concepts of goodness, rightness and oughtness as *non a priori*, and supposes that the facts that certain actions are right, that certain people and states of things are good, and that it is one's duty to behave in certain ways, are always contingent facts, never necessary truths, facts that are discovered, not by the light of any immediate or evident principles, but by viewing their effects on the well-being of humanity. But this is very far from being the case. In reality, there is a close analogy between our apprehension of the first principles of speculative reasoning and that of the fundamental values and primary principles of morals. Mr. Toulmin would be the last to deny the former. Why not also concede the same validity to those of morals ?

Professor Ayer is guilty of the same inconsistency. For, though he protests that he sticks close to sense experience and concrete fact, he is continually assuming certain first principles of the speculative reason which are known only by intellectual intuition. Now, if he will not in practice, pronounce these to be non-cognitive, though they are unsensed and undemonstrated, why should the first principles of morals be so pronounced ? In any case is there quite such a difference between sense perception and ethical perception ? In sense perception a subjective mechanism is involved upon which the accuracy of our sense knowledge depends. So too in ethical perception, which is dependent on the proper functioning of conscience—*i.e.*, on the proper application of the first principles of morals to the differing circumstances of every-day life. Usually, however, we accept sense information as valid and there is no reason why we should not normally treat conscience likewise. Again, in physical science, we posit the principle of the uniformity of nature and proceed to apply it when framing general laws. Similarly, in ethics, we take for granted certain principles which we then proceed to apply to concrete situations. The principles that ' good is to be done and evil avoided,' that 'greater good is preferable to lesser,' etc., deserve as equal a treatment, at least, as that of the uniformity of nature.

There is one aspect of Ethics, however, which Prof. Ayer's theory, though exaggerated, serves to bring out. It is the practical character of ethical science, something on which St. Thomas himself laid considerable stress.[1] In his *Summa Theologica* he treats of Ethics when

[1] Cf. M. Brocklehurst, The *Summa Theologiae* and Modern Ethical Thought, in *Dominican Studies*, July, 1948.

dealing with the return of creatures to God, and regards it as being interested, not in knowledge about the ontological world of being in general, but in the world that finds its focus in man, the practical world of human conduct. This, of course, is by no means a separate world, but it is a special dimension of the fundamental world of being. And when dealing with it one is concerned, not with judgements of the speculative intellect, but of the practical. For, though the general principle that knowledge is prior to action still holds, the ethical mind is primarily concerned, not with propositions to be known, but with acts to be done ; its focus is not knowledge but action. But this is not to deny that there is genuine cognitive content (truth) in the normative judgements of the practical reason. The first principles of the latter tell us what it is that must be done if we wish to attain to the ultimate end of man. And this is knowledge of a very important kind. Nevertheless, it remains true that they are primarily characterized by practicality rather than by truth. It is this aspect of ethical principles that Ayer has fastened on. Insistence on it is certainly very welcome, but not at the cost of sacrificing their cognitive value.

JEREMIAH NEWMAN

The Lady and the King

a theme of Irish Literature

by R. A. BREATNACH

Professor of Irish Language and Literature, University College, Cork

THE allegorical representation of Ireland as a poor old woman or as a maiden is so familiar that it would indeed be a tedious introduction to an outline of the history of the thought-form, were one to attempt a systematic survey of the authors, both poets and dramatists, who, in our own time and in the nineteenth century, have made serious or humorous use of the figure. In any case, such a survey would serve no purpose, for a catalogue illustrates but does not enlighten. Suffice it to say that through Francis Ledwidge's moving lyric *The Wedding Morning,* Lady Gregory's *The Old Woman Remembers,* Yeats's play *Cathleen Ni Houlihan,* and many other works, the line of the theme goes back to later nineteenth century poems and verse translations, and thence through the Nation songs, like Mangan's *Dark Rosaleen,* to the *Shanvan Vocht* of the '98 period. Here the stream of nationalist verse in English reaches its Gaelic source. The purpose of this essay is to trace in a general way the development of the theme in Gaelic literature. I think, or rather I hope that the account will not fail to demonstrate that Brooke and Rolleston caught only a glimpse of the " red-rose-bordered hem " of the poetic image when they wrote fifty years ago with romantic intensity : " when Irish poets imagined Ireland, she sits, an uncrowned queen, on the wild rocks of the Atlantic coast, looking out to the west, and the sorrow of a thousand years makes dark her ever youthful eyes. Her hair, wet with the dews, is her helmet, and her robe she has herself woven from the green of her fields and the purple of her hills."

I

On taking a step backwards into the eighteenth century, we find, associated with the allegorical lady, a second figure whom the inexorable course of historical events had quietly removed from scene. Alas that the removal of his analogue in real life has so seldom been accomplished with as little disturbance ! For the figure in question is a king : in this case, a king who had failed to make good his claim to a throne. In the darkness of that century the only light that flickered in Gaelic Ireland was the forlorn hope that the Catholic House of Stuart would be restored, as one of the later poets put it, " to the stewartship of the Three Kingdoms "—an expression which, by the way, is found in an Irish poem addressed to James, the first of the Stuart Kings of England, on his accession to the throne in 1603. Irish poets gave voice to that hope in innumerable poems which took a form found in the earlier literature of Ireland and Medieval Europe. In Irish it was called

aisling: "a dream," and dream-poetry it indeed was. The *genre* has been studied in its literary aspects by Professor Daniel Corkery in his penetrating work *The Hidden Ireland,* and other scholars have concerned themselves with investigating the problem of its origin—whether it is a native growth or derives from an outside source. While that interesting question is not unrelated to the subject broached here, we may refuse it substantive treatment and turn rather to consider a matter of immediate concern. This is the actual *mise en scène* of the allegory. As the eighteenth century went on, the allegorical framework became stereotyped, in the poetry composed in Munster at any rate, and after the middle of the century when all hope of restoration had vanished for the House of Stuart, though the poets continued to sing their *aislings,* despair of the Jacobite cause quenched the passionate fire of their verse. The form in broad outline is easily described. The poet is asleep when there appears to him a *spéirbhean,* a beautiful maiden, a queenly figure from another world, who is in grievous distress. He speaks to her, asking her who she is: is she Helen or Venus or Deirdre or Céarnait? Why is she weeping? She answers that she is the true spouse of the ancient kings, and she sorrows for her rightful prince who is in exile across the sea. Then she vanishes, usually not before giving utterance to a banal word of hope for the return of him who, the later poets at least knew, would never come.

The flirtation in modern *aisling*-poetry of Ireland conceived as a *spéirbhean,* literally "a sky-woman," with a foreign prince, either the Old or Young Pretender, has sometimes been looked upon with a measure of disapproval. One writer excuses the irrepressible poetic match-makers, by pointing out that in Scottish Jacobite songs there is "the warm affection of a simple, homely, rather unbookish people for kings of their own race" in contrast with the Irish *aislings* on the same theme where the note of affection is absent. But by taking the match-making too seriously, we run the risk of seeing more of reality in the allegory than was intended. One must not expect to find diminutives of affection or hypocoristic names in poems which concern the marriage of an allegorical Queen with an equally allegorical King. For, though James Francis Edward Stuart and his son Bonnie Prince Charles were once real men in a real world, in *aisling* poetry they are no more substantial than the poet's heavenly visitant in female form. Just as the *spéirbhean* is an idealized female abstraction symbolizing Ireland, so the Stuart, her mate, is no more than the male symbol of her deliverance: the "*spéir-fhear,*" the *deus ex machina,* the Hero, who, like his counterpart in the fairy-tale, shall with his kiss awaken her from her enchanted sleep of misery.

It is to be noted that this widespread folktale *motif* of the Prince who delivers a beautiful girl from enchantment with a kiss appears

to have been present to the mind of the first and greatest of the modern Jacobite *aisling*-writers, Aogán Ó Raithile, when he composed one of the finest examples of the *genre*, viz. *Mac an Cheannaí* "The Merchant's Son." Here a beautiful gentle maiden named Éire is represented as being in great affliction, while day after day she watches the sea to the south, to the east and to the west, awaiting the coming of the Merchant's Son. In all probability, the Old Pretender is meant, but the identification is not certain. There can be little doubt, however, that the name —and perhaps other features of the poem—were suggested to the poet by the well-known tale, rendered more than once into Irish, of the beautiful daughter of Hippocrates who had been changed into a she-dragon and was fated to remain in that shape until a merchant's son from the land of the west should deliver her with a kiss.

Here, one notices, the folklore *motif* of shape-changing is concrete and explicit. In the *aisling* the *motif* is implicit, for the whole point of the hoped-for marriage of the *Spéirbhean* with the King is thereby to effect a change from a condition of misery to one of happiness. But there will be occasion to refer again to that subject. To the other guise in which Ireland is seen by her poets attention may now be drawn. In *aisling*-poetry, as has been seen, the subject is simply the theme of the Lovelorn Maiden and the Absent King. But Irish poets often saw their country in a less pleasant light, though their love for her was none the less for that. Far from being young and fair and steadfast and innocent, they pictured her as old and ugly and fickle and lewd. This fancy gave birth to what may be called the theme of the Harlot Queen—a personage to whom there are numerous references in modern Irish verse. Mention was sometimes made of this *topos* almost in the same breath as that of the Lovelorn Maiden. So in an *aisling* of the late eighteenth century by perhaps the greatest master of the allegorical form, Eón Rua O'Sullivan, we find an echo of the idea in the closing stanza :

Mo mhíle creach ! ba chneasta an striapach í !
do bhí sí seal ag Art, ag Niall 's ag Naois,
do bhí sí seal ag flea na mBrianach ngroí
Is ba mhín a cneas gur caith an iasacht í.
"Alas ! alas ! an honest harlot was she indeed !
for a spell Art had her and Niall and Naois,
for a spell she supped at the strong O'Briens' feast—
and soft was her body till 'twas worn by lease !

And the changes were rung on the same thought by many of the company of the late modern period

"That sang, to sweeten Ireland's wrong,
Ballad and story, rann and song."

So when one slips out of the sombre darkness of the eighteenth century and emerges into the twilight of the seventeenth, David Ó Bruadair, who was then penning his lusty jeremiads, is heard reproaching Ireland for being unfaithful to the memory of her Kings and consorting with the "hairy Saxon droves." The poem commences:

> "O maid of the thick, wavy tresses,
> who gave thyself to lust and deceit,
> guide-star thou art of the harlots
> who flit, though many thy years."

Here Ireland is at once a maid, though not a lovesick one, a harlot and an aged woman. Still earlier in the same century, other poets, like the historian Geoffrey Keating, employ similar personifications.

But the poets of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were only the residuary legatees of an age-old poetic tradition which their condition of life did not permit them to alter or materially develop. They differed from their learned, aristocratic predecessors of the centuries that went before only in being less learned and more in touch with the grim realities of life. From them they inherited the concept in accordance with which Éire was the Spouse of the King who ruled her. It is not difficult to understand how the Queen so conceived degenerated in the minds of the later poets and became a Harlot Queen. For, deprived of her native rulers by the historical events of the early seventeenth century and thus bereft of those who, like the Earls that fled in 1607, were fitted by blood and tradition to woo and wed her, according to the poetic fiction, Ireland turned from her lawful allegiance and became the mistress of her oppressor. (Parenthetically—and piquantly—however, it may be remarked that, had James I behaved like a true lover after his accession in 1603, many a poet would have been found ready with an epithalamium on the wedding-day.) Clearly related to the picturesque idea of marital unfaithfulness and an influence in its development was another of which we have heard an echo in the stanza quoted already from a poem by Eón Rua O'Sullivan. According to this idea, Ireland was a fickle jade who wedded many kings but loved none for more than a brief space. Regarded from this point of view, it was only natural that she should have been thought of as an aged queen or, in more general terms, as an old woman, as David Ó Bruadair pictured her. But Ireland appears also to have been endowed by her poets with the gift of eternal youth, for it is in such guise that she appeared to the *aisling*-makers in particular and it is thus that all who wrote of her loved sometimes to think of her. She was therefore, to use a Latin phrase uniting her two chief aspects of youth and age, the *puella senilis*. The history of this composite personality takes us back into the period of Early Modern Irish literature.

II

In the four centuries before 1600, and indeed from time immemorial, literature was the prerogative of a hereditary learned class whose chief function was to praise the great ones, the heads of the various local ruling families scattered throughout the land. For this purpose there was at hand a highly developed literary medium and metric. As might be expected, these learned poets in the discharge of their function composed an enormous mass of encomiastic verse. Four hundred years allowed ample time for the development, elaboration, formalization and exhaustion of every aspect of this praise-poetry. In that period, unlike the early seventeenth century, when there was no king for Ireland to turn to, and later, when she looked to the Stuarts *faute de mieux*, the trouble was that there were far too many kings to choose from, every one of whom, if we believe the poets, was a fit partner for her. If love tends to express itself in diminutives, praise of the great lord and the petty chief alike flies to hyperbole, and so it was with the poetic encomium of medieval Ireland. Every local captain was a match for the great ones of history and tradition, for Conn " of the Hundred Battles," for Art " the Lonely," for Niall " of the Nine Hostages," for Brian " of the Tribute." But behind and beneath the façade of hyperbole, the poets betray an abiding awareness that something fundamental was lacking, something that would draw order out of the social and political chaos of Irish life. The elixir they dreamed of was the restoration of the High-kingship which had ended in the closing years of the twelfth century with the retirement of Rory O'Connor, the last of the native kings of all Ireland. Henceforth Ireland was portrayed as an ancient widowed queen who had survived the deaths of a long line of royal husbands, or alternatively, and related to this idea, as a sorrowful unwedded woman, like the Lovelorn Maiden of the *aislings*, awaiting a worthy mate, the High-king of her deliverance. The thought became an *idée fixe*, an ever-recurring theme the triteness of which had to be covered up in elegant variations of phraseology : in inventing fanciful names for the personified figure of Ireland, in devising similes and comparisons, in all the exercises of language to which a mind that has delivered its ultimate thought has recourse. It may be noted in passing that a similar intellectual exhaustion is evidenced at the end of the eighteenth century and shows itself in the same way, viz. in the invention of names like Gráinne Mhaol, Caitilín Ní Uallacháin, etc., for the *spéirbhean*.

Besides finding expression in evocations of the image of the widowed or unwedded queen and in a thousand allusions to the imminent approach of a fitting partner for her, the obsessive idea of the vacant High-kingship manifests itself in a less fugitive literary form. Reference has already

been made to the story of the Daughter of Hippocrates which was rendered into Irish by Fínín Ó Mathúna in 1475 and was retold a century later by a famous poet, Tadhg Dall Ó hUiginn, in a poem exhorting Conn O'Donnell, who died in 1583, to woo and wed the widowed Ireland. What is essentially the same tale is told by another well-known poet, Eochaidh O'Hussey, in a panegyric addressed to another Ulster chieftain, the celebrated Hugh Maguire, on the occasion of his inauguration in 1589. Since the story has relevance to our subject and is of interest in itself, it is worth repeating as it has been rendered into English by Standish Hayes O'Grady in Vol. I of the *Catalogue of MSS. in the British Museum.*

" Once upon a time [so runs the story] a young gentleman of Greece, after knighthood just conferred on him, was by his high spirit and ambition driven forth to seek adventure and to court danger ; he finds himself one day in a sequestered glen, the recesses of which conceal a narrow but clear and sparkling burn ; on the brink of this, under overshadowing boughs, sits a young woman who to his infinite disappointment turns out to be ill-favoured and in fact hideous beyond all reason ; but she is in great trouble as well, therefore in knightly wise he enquires gently the cause of her distress : was it transgression of her own, was it wizard's machination, was her plight one that might be remedied ? She made answer that she had been a girl whom for her beauty, her wit, her wealth and rank, warriors came from afar to woo ; a bevy of thirty highborn beauties she had, with whom once she went out : their purpose being ' to wash their smooth skins in unison ' at the foot of a certain waterfall ; but lo, the heaven pours forth a shower of some secret property so noxious that she is metamorphosed presently to the ugly thing before him now ; the cascade being on the sea shore, and her father ' with his philosophers ' and all his nobles patrolling the sands just then, her misfortune is patent to all ; the ' prophets ' [philosophers] aforesaid prescribe her instant seclusion, and she is relegated to this distant solitude : but ' a druid of the druids ' (i.e. one of the philosophers) forebodes that a young and sweet-spoken gallant of angelic semblance will appear yet, who shall wash her face in this same clear stream and rid her of the distorted mask she wears ; here she has been ever since, seeing nor man nor woman, and now she has told him all ; sir Greek is the man clearly ; he washes her face for her and she is changed ; never had such beauty been revealed to him : whiter than the floating swan, and again redder than the rowan's berry ; the effect on the deliverer is instantaneous : he woos, wins, weds, and for ever afterwards they live happily together."

The application of the apologue or parable is obvious even without the poet's explanation, which runs as follows : " The tearful young

woman is Ireland with her rain and dew-bespangled grass ; the knight-errant figures Fermanagh's chief ; the malignant downfall that disfigured her is the foreign horde, and the salutary bath that restores her charms means English blood that must be spilt."

With such apt illustrations did the poets of medieval Ireland love to embellish the theme that of all subjects was most frequently on their lips. But it would be a misconception to imagine that the institution of Kingship had ceased altogether in the Early Modern period to have relevance to the reality of life, or that it was nothing more than a dead symbol of a golden past to which poets clung in their despair of an intolerable present. This may have been the case more and more as century followed century, but the installation ceremony of every princeling was a recurring reminder to a people, whose sense of the presence of the past was so acute, of the pristine belief, common to all races, in the divinity that hedged around the regal office. Though there was no High-king, there were many lesser kings : an *embarras de choix* that an enemy knew how to exploit. In connection with the inauguration of one of these, a provincial king, we get some insight into the sacred nature of the office and some inkling of the significance it may have had for our forefathers in the early fourteenth century—and undoubtedly later. The source of the evidence is as prosaic and matter-of-fact as any serious-minded investigator could desire ; for the information is found in a sober record of an actual event preserved in two of our annalistic collections, the Annals of Loch Cé and the Annals of Connacht. The entry deals with the installation of Féilim O'Connor as King of Connacht in 1310, and the relevant portion runs as follows :—

" Maolruanaidh Mac Diarmada, King of Magh Luirg, decided on the following course of action : ' to elevate his fosterling [i.e. Féilim O'Connor] forthwith over all, and make him king by force without delay. And he brought him to Carnfree [i.e. a mound near Tulsk, in Co. Roscommon, where the O'Connors were inaugurated] and made him king on the Carn in accordance with the rites of the saints and of St. Dachonna of Eas in particular, after the most regal and noble and full fashion in which any man of his kin had been made king from the time of Brian, son of Eochaidh Muighmheadhóin, down to that day. Then, when Féilim son of Aodh, son of Eóghan, had espoused the Province of Connacht, his fosterer ministered to him that night according to the traditions of the elders and the old books ; and that was the most royal and most noble king's wedding feast that had ever been made for the King of Connacht until that day.' "

Of particular interest in the annal just quoted are three points : first, the religious nature of the ceremony in which the foster-father, a king himself and a layman, is described as playing a priestly role ; secondly, the explicitly traditional nature of the rite ; and thirdly,

the use of words proper to a marriage ceremony : " when Féilim . . . . had espoused the Province of Connacht," and again, " that was the most royal and the most noble *king's wedding feast.*" While one must guard against interpreting literally what may have been of metaphorical significance to an extent that cannot be divined, on the basis of the statement of the annalist, it seems justifiable to conclude that the spectators gathered six-hundred-and-fifty years ago on Carnfree regarded themselves, not simply as curious sightseers assembled to watch a ceremonial pageant of coronation that had long since ceased to have any real meaning, but as witnesses of a mysterious and solemn ceremony. We cannot know to what extent they appreciated it, but it is not going too far to suggest that they were dimly conscious of the enactment in their presence of a rite hallowed by immemorial tradition : the mystical wedding of a king to his territory. In reality, as is known from the studies of anthropologists and the historians of religion, those assembled nobles and clansmen were engaged in celebrating the Gaelic counterpart of what some regard as the oldest religious ceremony known to man, that of the Sacred Marriage of the King, the archetypal form of the modern coronation. In the investiture of Féilim O'Connor then, we have, I believe, an instance of the expression in ritualistic ceremonial of perhaps the most central and most enduring concept in Irish secular history. In this case we have to do with a provincial king, but we can be sure that the High-kingship was regarded in the same light, for the concept of Kingship seems to have been one and the same everywhere, whatever the status of the king.

III

In regard to the institution of the High-kingship, however, we have no record of a solemn rite of inauguration. But it is possible that the observance known as *Feis Teamhrach* " the Feis of Tara," literally " the espousal of Tara," was once related to the installation of the High-king. Be that as it may, we are fortunate in possessing the correlative of a ritualistic practice, viz. a myth or legend which describes how a famous High-king chanced to meet a certain *puella senilis* and, as a reward for his daring, obtained the sovereignty of Ireland. Our medieval forefathers told and re-told the legend so often that one inclines to suspect that the story-tellers and their audiences were not all as critical of its authenticity as the clerical scribe of the Book of Leinster who, writing about 1160, subscribed the following profession of disbelief in Latin to his version of *Táin Bó Cuailgne :* " But I who have written this history or rather fable give no credence to anything in this history or fable. For some things in it are the delusions of demons, some the inventions of poets, some again have the semblance of truth, some have not, and some yet again are for the delectation of fools."

Just forty years after that revealing declaration was made, about the year 1200, a poet whose name we do not know, in a poem addressed to a famous ancestor of the Féilim O'Connor of whom we have spoken (his grandfather's great-grandfather, in fact), re-told the tale of the *puella senilis* and the High-kingship. The O'Connor in whose honour the poem was composed was Cathal Croibhdhearg, "of the Red Hand," a younger brother of Rory, the last High-king of Ireland. Cathal died King of Connacht in 1224, and his obituary notices in the Annals leave us in no doubt that his contemporaries regarded him as being of the mettle of a High-king. It is significant that two of the Annals describe him as "king of the Gaels of Ireland in effect" and as "the best Irishman in nobility and honour that lived from the time of Brian Boru." Though he does not appear to have made any overt attempt to establish himself as King of Ireland, undoubtedly the fact that his father and brother had both gained the title and his own personal qualities and position as King of Connacht combined, in the eyes of his Gaelic contemporaries, to fit him beyond all others to succeed to the sovereign office. But the Norman war-lords of the early thirteenth century had scant respect for the native claims or traditions, and we can be sure that, if Cathal Red-hand did not attempt to emulate the achievements of his brother Rory or his father Toirdhealbhach, it was because he recognized that blue blood and valour could not prevail over the armoured might of the foreign mercenaries. But though Cathal appears to have seen the writing on the wall and to have read and understood it, there must have been many alive at that time who preferred to close their eyes to reality and dream of the irrevocable golden years. Perhaps the poet, who, sometime about the year 1200, wove the name of Cathal into the tale of the High-kingship, may have been one of those day-dreamers. Whether or no, he was a good poet and a master of allegorical narrative.

The poem, which is still unpublished, has come down to us in the codex known as the Book of Í Mhaine, written before 1394, and in a later MS. dating from the seventeenth century. It comprises 212 lines, commencing *Tairnig an sealsa ag Síol Néill.* Freely translated, this means "the dynasty of the race of Niall is at an end." In the light of what we know of Irish history for two centuries before and for six hundred years after 1200, the line is not unmeaningful: in truth, it would make an appropriate *leitmotif* for a study of much of the literary output of poets during that long period. Taken in its context, however, the line is no more than the statement of a historical fact; for, two hundred years before Cathal's time, Brian Boru had dealt the death-blow to the traditional dynasty of all Ireland by deposing Malachy and himself assuming the High-kingship. Besides stating a fact, however, the line is the proem to a remarkably elaborate attempt to provide Cathal with

an incontrovertible title, based on an alleged ancient tradition, to rule Ireland. By long usage right of succession to the High-kingship was reserved to the *stirps regia* descended from Niall Naoighiallach, Niall "of the Nine Hostages," who, Professor Thomas O'Rahilly tells us, died King of Tara about the year 427 A.D. Niall was credited by tradition with being the founder of the High-kingship, and the tale of how he gained the right to reign in the place of his father, Eochu, from his four elder half-brothers had been told a number of times in Irish literature before our poet set to work on it. Fortunately for his purpose, he could surmount the difficulty of attaching Cathal to the traditional *stirps regia* by going one better than the most resourceful legitimist: he could appeal to the generally accepted pedigree which traced Cathal back to Brian (earlier Brīon), Niall's eldest brother! In point of fact, at a period when all history was a confused mass of lore, had our poet been charged with fabricating tradition—an activity that had commenced long before his time—he could easily have exculpated himself by citing the legendary belief that Brian preceded Niall in the High-kingship, or by referring to another which "foretold" that the sovereignty would revert to his descendants in later times. Indeed it is not unlikely, had he been challenged, that he could have silenced his critics by invoking many other supporting traditions and legends that have since been lost. And so he began his tale:

"The dynastic line of Nial is at an end, just as it was prescribed by the Sovereignty herself, from whom victorious Niall of the battle-bands received the fair kingship. Niall, Oilill, curly-haired Fiachra, Fergus and Brian of the Bregians were the five sons of Eochaidh Muigh-mheadhóin the fair, Eochaidh of the long sword. To pay a visit to the noble ones of Ireland, went the well-born, lithesome five; happy the man from whom that band did spring, the children of the King of green-flanked Tara. The five bloods from the stronghold of Conn hunt on the domed hill of Knowth; the young warriors from sloping Tara bag a large, wild, spirited boar. Niall and fair-haired Fergus erect a hunter's hut of wattles; Oilill and Fiachra cut green-topped, white-rooted sedge. Brian, the eldest, thatched the long sides of the structure. Then they kindle a sparkling, high-piled fire and cook the great heavy pig. Having consumed the meat fit for men, those five champions of Tara's household, ruddy of face and fair of hair, were seized by thirst after their repast. Said Brian the leader: 'Let one of you don his arms and quickly search out water in my goodly cup.' Firm Fergus of the companies consented to go, out of concern for the dear lads, to search the smooth, yielding wood—until he came upon a well. When generous Fergus drew the cup to him he saw the Thing: an aged horrible, ugly, tough-haired, high-cheeked female with a raucous voice; who said, intent on driving him away, that he would not get a single cup

of water for offer of gold or silver unless he gave her her will. Back from her to his brother Brian went generous Fergus, but mention made the worthy lad of finding nor the woman nor the water. One by one they go, the sons of Moingfhionn the valorous, but without profit for their pains : they got not water. Fair-haired Niall seized the cup and set out with haste ; he searched the dark, gloomy wood seeking water or river. Not long was the brave youth, Niall from the strongholds of Tara, when the noble lad espied the well of flowing, cool water. Five tall, beautiful yew-trees of equal height with spreading branches, where a host might shelter, stood above the icy-watered pool. Pretty showers of round, purplish, hard berries dropped through the dense green foliage into the attractive, unusual well. A pillar-stone stood on the bottom of the steady-watered spring that vied with the sun in brilliance ; the bright-surfaced, smooth stone lit up the deep water. From its top issued, never ceasing, never diminishing, a jet of water which fell in a foamy, bright, gentle arch into the well. Hither and thither swam a multitude of salmon ; all about the pool, reaching to the bottom, were they, gliding in under the chill, clear spout, around the roots of the regal yews. Niall of the bright hair poised the cup when, fleet of foot, he reached the well ; he thrust it into the clear, cool, sparkling water, thronged to sandy bottom with salmon. There arose out of the pool a hag, wild in mien and rough of voice ; a long, bony, hard-sinewed hand did she reach out to grasp the cup. Sore-wounding Niall, son of the king of the Gaels, he of the fetters, beheld her and his heart in his bosom quailed before the ugly, repelling monster. Watery, grey eyes had she, and bristly, grey unkempt eyebrows, and a cropped, untended, fire-blackened pate crowned her bony, great-lugged head. ' Not even to thee, O illustrious one, O descendant of Tuathal from Tara ! Thou shall not have, without payment, the fresh rippling water of my well.' ' Nor silver, nor gold have I, O unendurable monster in woman's shape, and I will not give thee in return for it the cup of Eochaidh, High-king of Erin.' ' Even didst thou own the cup that thou has attributed to the High-king, liefer would I have thyself, O pith of Leitrim.' A hardy decision the son of noble Eochaidh Muighmheadhóin did take : though loathsome and uncomely her aspect, Niall ' of the Nine Houses ' gave her her will. Afterwards the descendant of Fiachra, whose racing was swift, looked upon her and saw at his side the beauty of a yellow-haired virgin. Sun and wind would take fire from her unruffled, queenly countenance ; white was her form as ever the fresh snow of a single night. ' Since in beauty I have parted with thee and since thou hast assumed thy proper form, say, O beloved high-born child, who thou art, thou maid of many shapes.' ' I am the Sovereignty, O modest Niall, and the lightsome, sandy well is the Isle of Fódla of the bright streams. The five great yews are the five rugged provinces, and their

berries are the booties of the mighty, vigorous kings. The shining, unyielding pillar is Uisneach, the mid-point of Ireland, and the pretty, flowing spring is the wedding-feast of green-flanked Tara. Sipping it are the kings of Ireland : the mighty host of salmon ; as they drink of the bright, rare, flowing water, so shall the kings sup the feast of the dwellings of Tara. Now shalt thou behold, O Niall, all of the line of thine own seed, numbered by myself, that shall inherit the smooth-surfaced Isle of Fódla . . . . ."

At this point we must abruptly leave the lady and her vaticination, for the remaining third of the poem, though interesting in itself, does not concern our subject closely. It is only fair, however, to satisfy curiosity to the extent of saying that the lady finds no perceptible difficulty in recognizing the O'Connor High-kings amongst the salmon in the magic well, or in singling out from amongst them a mighty one which was distinguished appropriately by having " brownish red fins." The poet even succeeds in finding room for a shoal of what are described as " ugly rough fish," which are duly identified as the Normans. Unfortunately the final quatrain of the poem is corrupt—in part at any rate. With some emendation however, one can understand it to mean : " May the just-judging, honourable High-king (i.e. Cathal) desert me not—an event portending peril to Banbha ; old shall I be when he shall come." Thus the poem ends with an allusion to the changing of the beautiful girl back again into the form of the loathsome crone whose beauty can be restored only by the intervention of a king.

The foregoing tale is only one *ad hoc* redaction, though from a literary point of view a very elaborate and developed one, of the legend of the High-Kingship. The hand of the literary artist is evidenced, amongst other things, by the fact that, while the main traditional features of the story have been retained, the setting and much else have been taken over from another beautiful myth which purports to explain the source of wisdom, or " occult knowledge that enlightens," as the Irish phrase has it. But we must not digress, however interesting it might be to follow the poet in his artistry. An earlier, more complete and much less conflated prose version of our take, entitled *Echtra mac nEchach*, " The exploit of the sons of Eochu," which is preserved in the Book of Ballymote and in the Yellow Book of Lecan, has been edited both by Stokes and O'Grady. Here again the hideous hag becomes a beautiful damsel when Niall kisses her, and then addresses him in verse. The poem is a short one of sixteen lines. It ends as follows : " The men of Munster, though valiant in battle, shall be parted from the sovereignty of Tara ; from this day until Judgment . . . . come, no king from amongst them shall possess Ireland but one only." The exception is identified as Brian Boru, and for this and other reasons we can conclude that the

version in question—or at all events the poem—cannot be earlier than 1014, the year of Brian's death. But the poem may well be a later interpolation. We can, however, of a certainty, trace the legend of Niall and *puella senilis* to the period of Brian Boru, thanks to a well-known historian and poet named Cúán Ûa Lothcháin who died in 1024. Cúán's long poem of nearly three hundred lines (which the late Miss Joynt published several years ago in *Ériu*) is a sort of saga in miniature. It opens with a eulogy of Tara " pinnacle of a hundred kings," but after sixteen lines the poet comes to grips with his theme. It is a tale of jealousy and cruelty and injustice and of the ultimate triumph of the heroic Niall over the villainy of a wicked scheming woman—the wife of his father Eochu. Cúán had a grand tale to tell and he seems to have set himself to embody in it all the traditions of his hero that had come down. It is possible that his motive was not entirely literary or antiquarian. He was a subject of Malachy, the High-king whom Brian " of the Tribute " deposed. Perhaps, then, we should see in his poem an early eleventh century equivalent of a newspaper leading article asserting the legitimist claim !

However that may be, farther back than the year 1000 A.D. or thereabouts, we cannot pursue the *puella senilis*, except perhaps by inference and in imagination. In another poem, found in the Dindshenchas, which cannot be much later than Cúán Ûa Lothcháin's, and elsewhere in prose, she is associated with a prehistoric king of Ireland named Lughaidh Laoighdhe, who evidently was the mythical ancestor of the pre-Goidelic peoples known to history as the Érainn. At one time these were widely settled in Munster, and the medieval historians naturally found a place for Lughaidh in the genealogical tree of the leading Munster families. The legend connecting him with the *puella senilis*, therefore, could be the Munstermen's riposte to the Midland and Northern tradition which claimed her for Niall " of the Nine Hostages."

IV

For the sake of completeness, some effort must be made to come to closer grips with the phantom whose literary history has been traced to the end of the first millennium A.D. But, as might be expected, as soon as we attempt to bring her to bay on the edge of the literary frontier, she eludes our grasp and fades like the baseless fabric of a dream into a far horizon that only imagination can cross. In all the versions of the legend which have been reviewed, with the sole exception of that attributed to Cúán Ûa Lothcháin, the metamorphosed crone identifies

herself as "Sovereignty," i.e. Kingship. How that abstraction was understood in medieval Ireland it is difficult to know: was it a mere literary figment, or what the scribe of the Book of Leinster would have called a delusion of the Devil, and what we might describe as a ghost of a forgotten religion? Who can say? Keating, writing in the seventeenth century, tells us that the hag was an allegorical representation of Ireland; but Keating lived more than six hundred years after Cúán Ûa Lothcháin, and he was scarcely in any better position than ourselves to read the minds of the poets of the Middle Irish period. All we can conclude from his statement is that his explanation represents a stage in the continuous process of "rationalization" which every myth must undergo as a condition of survival. Even if his witness be accepted, when it is asked what was the significance of the central coition or osculation incident of the tale, there is no answer. Similarly in regard to the interpretation put on the metamorphosis: there is no means of knowing what symbolical import, if any, was attached to it. In face of such difficulties, a prudent investigator might be well advised to halt on the bourne of literature and make no effort to lay the ghost. But the temptation to venture a few steps amongst the shadows cast by the human imagination is strong. Let us take up the challenge of the darkness then.

On the assumption that we are dealing, not with a poetic invention, but rather with a ghost inherited from an antique religion, some slight, though perhaps illusory, progress can be made towards a possible solution of the problem of the ultimate identity of the King's Lady. If we remind ourselves how divinity at all times in the remote and medieval past, and even in the modern historical period, has hedged the King, the assumption will not appear far-fetched. The next step is to analyse the different versions of the legend and pick out the main features common to all of them. In this way a hypothetical earlier form of the myth is established which can be assumed to be a step closer to the original and to preserve some at least of its essential features. When this process is applied to the tales of the High-kingship it becomes clear that an earlier form of the Irish myth of Kingship comprised roughly the following features: a hero, a hunt in which the hero is victorious over a wild animal, the cooking and eating of the flesh of the animal, a search for water (in a royal cup), the encounter with the *puella senilis*, the coition (or osculation), the metamorphosis, and finally the bestowal (or promise) of sovereignty. Admittedly there is not a lot to go on here, but still a number of the incidents enumerated appear, however dimly, to recall cultic practices found in other mythologies in connection with the King's Sacred Marriage. Without attempting a detailed consideration of all the implications involved, we may note that the killing of the wild animal answers to the combat or victory *motif* attested in

all the accounts we possess of the heathen King's Wedding. So the eating of the flesh of the animal is analogous to the rite of ambrosia or consumption of the symbolical heavenly food. The water again recalls the practice of lustration or purification, and a coition incident is known to have formed part of the ceremony elsewhere, notably in Egypt. In light of these considerations, to mention only the more obvious ones, it is tempting to see in the *puella senilis* the analogue of the goddess who elsewhere was the apotheosized king's bride in the symbolical nuptials : Isis in Egypt, Demeter or Jocasta amongst the Greeks, and a thronging galaxy of shadowy beings whose names, however dissimilar, appear to be no more than fanciful aliases of the deified Mother Earth. But in this doubtful equation there is not complete identity between the terms, for the ladies in question, whatever other diversions they indulged in, do not appear to have been given to the peculiar transmogrification to which the *puella senilis* was subject. The *motif* of transformation under the conditions attaching to it in our myth, seems to be peculiarly Celtic, though Vendryes has suggested a possible relationship between the *puella senilis* and the Italic male deity Vortumnus (or Vertumnus) who presided over the changes of the year. Perhaps therein lies the secret of the idea of metamorphosis. Perhaps not. But the idea may rather be related to a peculiarly human physiological change. However, it should be added that the goddess connected with the King, according to another tradition traceable in early Irish literature, is not subject to transformation.

From these mythological shades let us turn back for a moment in conclusion to the *puella senilis* of literature. As we have seen, she was (the principle of) Kingship to our medieval ancestors, if we take them at their word, and later, now under one aspect of her schizophrenic personality, now under the other, she was regarded as a personification of Ireland. In the beginning her lot was fittingly cast in high places : in the palace of the High-king or, when that institution was no more, in the dwellings of the great ones of the land. Since the evidence which has been adduced may give the impression that she was a stay-at-home personage, a passing reference may be made to the opinion of the American scholar G. H. Maynadier, who assures us that she was a great traveller in her time. Of course, she travelled incognito, using various pseudonyms. For one of her names, " the loathly hag," this authority is responsible. According to Maynadier, her itinerary was as follows : " Starting from Ireland, and often ' wandring by the weye ' like a very trollop, she seems early to have made a tour of Scandinavian lands and the island of Great Britain. There are traces of her in other countries of north-western Europe." It would appear, however, that she did not always meet the best people, for we are reminded that Chaucer's notorious Wife of Bath knew her well, and told a tale of her

on the road to Canterbury. At home, on the other hand, she seems never altogether to have forgotten her former high estate or to have ceased to hope for a return to it, although she is occasionally met with in low company in folktales even to-day.

But on balance, it would seem that, though the King has long since joined the shades of forgotten tradition, the Lady " of the changing form " has managed to maintain, to a remarkable degree, her separate identity in written Irish literature. For her survival she has to thank her poets, and it is appropriate that a quotation from a work by one who would be accounted a true brother of that company should bring this essay to a close. The context is the final incident in *Cathleen Ni Houlihan,* when Michael has broken away from the restraining arms of Delia, to follow the Old Woman down the road to Killala . . . . Peter turns to Patrick and asks : " Did you see an old woman going down the path ? " And the reply is : " I did not, but I saw a young girl, and she had the walk of a queen."

Such is the tenacity of life of myth.*

R. A. Breatnach

* The foregoing is the text, recast in essay form, of a public lecture, entitled *The Shanvan Vocht*, delivered in University College, Cork, in connection with *An Tóstal*, 1953. Bibliographical references have been dispensed with, since a more detailed treatment of the subject is in course of preparation. It may be added that the statement on p. 328 concerning the rite of inauguration of the High-king is in need of emendation. Professor D. A. Binchy has kindly drawn the attention of the author to a hitherto unexploited Old Irish text which is of the greatest interest in that connection.

Reviews

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ERIU. Vol. XIII. Dublin : Royal Irish Academy ; Hodges Figgis and Co. 1952. Pp. 218. 18s.

LIBRI EPISTOLARUM SANCTI PATRICII EPISCOPI. Part I, Text and Introduction ; Part II, commentary, by Ludwig Bieler. Dublin : Stationery Office (The Irish Manuscripts Commission). 1952. Pp. 150, 215. 21s. each part.

THE WORKS OF ST. PATRICK. Translated and annotated by Ludwig Bieler. Westminster, Maryland : The Newman Press. London : Longmans, Green and Co. 1953. Pp. 121. 25s.

This number of *Eriu* is devoted to the memory of Professor Osborn Bergin, who died three years ago. It is a worthy tribute to the man who for many decades was revered as a scholar, feared as a critic, loved as a friend. In a thumbnail biography which is a model of its kind, Dr. Eleanor Knott seeks to probe the secret of his influence. First and foremost came his fine intelligence ; next his early training in the Classics, wherein he could easily have won an enviable reputation ; then his mastery of the chief modern languages. It is no accident that he is the author of what, in form and content, is perhaps the most perfect poem in modern Irish literature. Dr. Knott does well to lay stress on his passion for truth ; it explains his insistence on accuracy, his dislike of specious theory, however plausibly expounded, the impersonal quality of his criticism, which left no lasting hurt, since its purpose was so obviously to correct, not to beat down and crush. His kindly interest in students of Irish, at home and abroad and his generous aid to them in their difficulties would alone make him worthy of lasting remembrance.

In *Eriu,* it takes the shape of twenty-two articles, all save two of which deal with the Irish language and literature. Professor Lloyd-Jones treats of the Welsh word *Palach,* and Professor Kenneth Jackson provides a learned treatise on the Gaelic *notitiae* in the Book of Deer. His detailed study of the differences—in truth not very far-reaching—between Scottish and Irish scribes in the writing of their common tongue during the twelfth century is especially valuable. Foreign scholarship is represented by the veterans Holger Pedersen from Denmark and Joseph Vendryes from France ; also by Alf Sommerfelt from Norway, Vernam Hull from America, and Maartje Draak from Holland. These names remind us of more spacious days, when the number of Celtic scholars in European and American universities was greater than it now is, or is likely in the near future to become. Professor Binchy brings evidence to show that the Saga of Fergus mac Leiti had its place from the beginning in the Ulster Cycle, and was not, as Thurneysen thought, an invention of the 11th century. The tale mentions personages of the pre-historic period, and helps to throw some light on the social life of ancient Ireland. The same may be said of the tract on the birth of Cormac mac Art, edited by Vernam Hull, and of the saga of the discovery of Cashel, edited by Professor Myles Dillon, though Corc, the hero of the Cashel story, belongs to the dawn of Irish history, and his descendants, who were later Kings of Munster, are listed. Very useful to the historian is the study of the old " prophecy " called

the " Baile Cuind ", by Professor Gerard Murphy. He assigns it to the 7th century, whereas Thurneysen had assigned it to the 10th century. Important, too, is the poem on the status and rights of the Airgialla, edited by Mrs. Maureen O'Daly. Its basic matter may be early, for the claims made for the Airgialla in their relations with the great Ui Neill kings could hardly be put forward seriously in, say, the 10th century. Politically, Airgialla remained very much under a cloud, but as it was the state in which Armagh, the Ecclesiastical capital, was situated, it could never be deprived of a certain distinction. The poems in which Queen Gormlaith is depicted bewailing the death of her husband Niall Glundub, King of Ireland, have literary merit. What would please Dr. Bergin best in this volume is the high standard of scholarship in every one of the contributions. Nor would he conceal his pride in the fact that so many of the writers were his pupils.

What may be called the classical edition of the writings of St. Patrick, has been that prepared by Dr. Newport White for the Royal Irish Academy in 1905. Its basis is the text of the 9th century Book of Armagh. The discovery of a 10th century manuscript in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, led to the publication, for the S.P.C.K., London, of a revised text, by Dr. White in 1918. In the same year he published—also for the S.P.C.K.—a translation of the Confession and of the Letter against Coroticus. Dr. Bieler, in this new edition for the Irish Manuscripts Commission, uses the same manuscript sources. It need hardly be said that his work is done with the absolute thoroughness for which he is so justly famous. Dr. White, in the edition of 1918, was not so wedded to the Book of Armagh text as he had chosen to be in 1905. Dr. Bieler carries this hesitant attitude towards the oldest text a step further. Such alterations as this brings can be traced easily in the formidable critical apparatus. In a number of cases the final decision between readings must rest on personal taste. To the historian the matter is of no consequence, since there is no phrase in the new text in which a change of reading brings a change of meaning. With the Biblical text in the Confession and the Letter, Dr. Bieler has taken almost unbelievable trouble. His references to biblical quotations and echoes must be nearly double the number given by Dr. White. St. Patrick thus appears, more than ever in this edition, a man whose style is impregnated with Bible speech. It is not, of course, always clear that the word or combination of words employed by St. Patrick is a genuine biblical reminiscence. On this point Dr. White and Dr. Bieler often disagree, and the conclusion either way would seem to be arbitrary. Dr. Bieler's edition is unique in its Index Grammaticus, which fills twenty-seven pages. Here St. Patrick's syntax and his *genus dicendi* are subjected to minute scrutiny. What St. Patrick, who thought that his style of writing was to be unable to write at all, would think of this, is an interesting speculation ! In his translation of the Confession and Letter Dr. Bieler appears to imitate the simplicity of the original. The result is something bald and jerky, and perhaps all the better for that. Dr. Bieler adds translations of the hymn of Secundinus, the Lorica, and the Canons attributed to a synod over which St. Patrick presided. There are hundreds of notes, in themselves a monument to the comprehensiveness of Dr. Bieler's reading and the tranquil maturity of his judgment.

JOHN RYAN

HISTORY

MONASTIC SITES FROM THE AIR. By David Knowles and J. K. S. St. Joseph. Cambridge University Press. 1952. 55s.

MEDIEVAL RELIGIOUS HOUSES IN ENGLAND AND WALES. By David Knowles and R. Neville Hadcock. London : Longmans. 1953. 42s.

THESE two most useful volumes must surely excite envy in the heart of any Irishman. We have innumerable monastic ruins in our country, but very few of them indeed can compare in their present state of preservation with the ruins which are so finely illustrated in the 138 photographs printed in the Cambridge volume ; and we are only beginning to learn how valuable are the services that can be rendered to the antiquarian by the skilled air-photographer. Professor David Knowles and Mr. St. Joseph have included almost every famous monastic site, and not a few that are little known to the general student, in this survey of English monastic architecture. On one point we can boast a superiority that is not challenged by any of the monastic sites here illustrated. For sheer antiquity, and the romance that goes with high antiquity, England has little or nothing that can be compared with Glendalough or Clonmacnoise or Kells or Inis Cealtra, not to mention such spectacular ruins as the bee-hive cells on the Skellig rock. Lindisfarne is included in this volume, and Mount St. Michael off the coast of Cornwall ; but on both sites the surviving ruins are of post-Conquest buildings. Lindisfarne, for example, was no more than a cell dependent on Durham in the Norman period, and the buildings here illustrated belong entirely to this later period : there is nothing to remind us directly of Aidan or Cuthbert save the romantic beauty of the site. Saxon buildings have rarely been left standing, so that the editors are justified in their statement that ' for the purpose of this book all pre-Conquest monastic architecture can be neglected '. The story would be different in any parallel volume of Irish monastic sites.

But what a wealth of beauty survives in every county of modern England ! Some of the greatest monasteries—Durham, Ely, Winchester, Gloucester, Chester and, of course, Canterbury—survive to-day as cathedral churches ; but the monastic buildings (as at Ely) have been easily adapted to the purposes of a post-Reformation cathedral cloister. Other famous monasteries such as Glastonbury, most ancient and venerable of England's Benedictine monasteries, Bury St. Edmund's, Waverley (the earliest of all English Cistercian houses) or Sempringham (once the mother-house of an indigenous order of canons and nuns) have perished almost wholly ; others, like Fountains, Furness or Rievaulx, have left imposing ruins. In rural areas much seems to have depended on the caprice of the layman who became the landed proprietor after the dissolution of the monasteries. Welbeck Abbey, for example, survives as an impressive modern mansion—though it is odd to find the editors of this volume speaking of Welbeck as ' a modest Premonstratensian abbey '. Longleat House incorporates the buildings of what was once an Augustinian priory. Other greater and more famous houses have been suffered to perish completely. At Sempringham, for example, the ancient monastic site had

been wholly forgotten, and it was left to modern air-photography to determine the true position of buildings that are now wholly covered by grass and sod. Here surely is a lesson that we can learn at home, where sites such as Clonard, Rahan or Lismore await investigation.

The short introduction at the beginning of this volume is the joint work of two expert scholars, and is most helpful as a guide to the general character of monastic buildings, taking account of the characteristics peculiar to the houses of each order. The most familiar feature of a monastic site, the cloister, is here said to be most probably derived from Roman basilican monasteries such as Saint Paul without the Walls. Cloisters were not part of monastic buildings of the Irish or early Gallic tradition. The dominant English type is, of course, directly borrowed from the type of great monastic building developed in Normandy ; but there are special characteristics of each new order. Cistercian planning, for example, was affected by the large number of lay-brothers who formed a normal part of every Cistercian community. The Carthusian houses were unlike any others ; and it should be noted that the editors of this volume have wisely included an air-photograph of the modern buildings at Parkminster, which give a most valuable clue to the normal type of Carthusian planning. The friars in their turn developed ' a simplified form of the monastic complex '. England in the fifteenth or early sixteenth century must have boasted a wealth of sound and technically admirable building, which (if it had survived) would contrast forcibly with a great deal of modern English architecture.

In 1940 Dr. David Knowles published his *Religious Houses of Medieval England* which has served for the past twelve years as a very useful guide for those who were fortunate enough to acquire a copy of the book. Meanwhile Mr. Neville Hadcock had been working independently on his own list of English and Welsh monastic houses which was the basis of his unusually fine map of *Monastic Britain*, published by the Ordnance Survey in 1950. The present volume is thus the result of researches carried through over a long period of years by two scholars who have shared a common interest and have pooled their resources for the benefit of workers in the same field. As compared with the lists of houses of monks and friars which Dr. Knowles published in 1940, the lists in this volume include all the known houses of the military orders, hospitals and secular colleges (including the colleges of Oxford and Cambridge). A few of the older Celtic monasteries have also been included, where they are known to have survived into the period after 1066. A large number of minor corrections, many of them due to Mr. Hadcock's detailed researches, have been made in this revised edition of the earlier lists ; and the notes, which are here printed as foot-notes, contain a wealth of material apart from a brief statement of the evidence for dates of foundation and dissolution. The details given, for example, as to the known population of the various houses in each successive century, are particularly valuable. For the most part they have been taken from the corresponding volumes of the *Victoria County Histories* where these have been published. At the end of the volume there is a full index, and six exceptionally clear and full maps.

Dr. Knowles has written an admirable short survey of English monastic

history for this volume, which is of special interest since it includes his personal views and judgments on the later phases of that history in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. He has also written a short but very useful "*Notitia Monastica*" which gives a clear account of earlier attempts to compile complete lists of English religious houses, from Leland, Bale and Dugdale to modern times.

AUBREY GWYNN

ENGLISH HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS: VOLUME II (1042–1189). Edited by David C. Douglas and George W. Greenaway. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode. 1953. Pp. xxiv, 1014. 80s.

THIS handsomely designed volume is the first to appear of an ambitious new series and it is therefore in order to ask if it suggests that the whole series will achieve its avowed objective. This, according to the publishers' "blurb," is "—to present, in a form intelligible to the general reader, the fundamental sources of English history—." The non-specialist is then the mark of the series.

This being so, it seems odd that the price of this volume should have been made prohibitive for the historical amateur of average means. The selection of material for such a collection is always open to debate and no compilers have ever yet been known to satisfy all their readers; but it seems legitimate to voice the criticism that the cost of this particular volume might have been reduced by a less lavish method of selection. Was it really necessary to provide a full reproduction of the Bayeux Tapestry when such a reproduction can already be obtained at reasonable cost in the excellent Penguin edition? In view of C. Johnson's recent edition of the *Dialogus de Scaccario* another complete translation, as provided here, seems a work of supererogation. If such opportunities of pruning had been taken a cheaper volume might have been the result; or alternatively documents of which good modern versions are lacking might have been included.

Only a few entries relate directly to Ireland. This is excusable in a period when the bitter nexus of Anglo-Irish relations had hardly begun to form. The Papal documents for the Henrician invasion find their place. *Laudabiliter* is included as well as the indisputably authentic letters of Alexander III. One might reasonably have expected the decrees of the Synod of Cashel to have appeared also, or some account of the conquest of the country from a source such as Giraldus' *Expugnatio Hiberniae*. The Orpen generation of Irish historical scholarship is adopted throughout as the standard of reference; the editors show no acquaintance with the revisions in interpretation of this period as the result of the work of contemporary scholars in this country.

The fourth Part of the book deserves special mention. Entitled "Land and People," it is a comprehensive collection of economic and social documents. The allowance of nearly 200 pages includes manorial surveys from before and after the conquest and an informative collection of feudal charters. Domesday Book is given a special section and so are the towns, Henry II's charter to Dublin being one of the chosen examples (p. 967).

Some of the omissions are surprising. In the section on the Church one might have expected to find an extract from Aelred of Rievaulx, probably the greatest native English monastic churchman of the period covered by this book. Such an item would have been a fitting pendant to the few pages on Rievaulx (p. 692–697) contained here and might have provided a balance to William of Malmesbury's account of Continental Cistercianism. In this ecclesiastical section pride of place is understandably given to the dramatic duel between Henry II and St. Thomas. This topic has received no fuller documentation outside the monumental Rolls *Materials* themselves.

Summing up, it may be said that it is good to have this collection without the " constitutional " emphasis which was the chief legacy of Stubbs and which has now probably had its day. We are now beginning to realize that institutional history cannot profitably be studied *in vacuo ;* it only receives full intelligibility when related to the concrete circumstantial, perhaps even fortuitous, developments which constantly condition it. The editors of this volume never allow us to forget this fact ; at every stage the choice of documents is directed towards the revealing of that concrete reality of events and persons which is the irreducible minimum of history. Thus the Introduction (an achievement of condensed scholarship) rightly insists on the importance to English history of the individual personalities of the monarchs of the period. " Their private lives were interwoven with English history which cannot be interpreted without reference to their characteristic acts " (p. 39). Perhaps an occasional return to the fashionably derided " Kings and Queens " type of history might do no harm to the modern student who all too often lets speculation take precedence over facts.

There is no question as to the usefulness of such translated collections, for the days when every educated man had some knowledge of Latin are now past. One might quarrel with details of the present translation. Perhaps the chief complaint might be that it sometimes runs the risk of being a paraphrase rather than a faithful rendering. But only the most fanatical Latinist would make this a fundamental objection and final verdict on the intentions and success of the book must be favourable. Many members of the historical reading public will be tempted to beg or steal it ; they can hardly afford to buy it.

JOHN B. MORRALL

SAINT BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX. By Watkin Williams. Manchester University Press. 1953. 28s.

THE LETTERS OF SAINT BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX. Translated and edited by Bruno Scott James. London : Burns Oates. 1953. 42s.

SAINT BERNARD has not been forgotten in the eighth centenary year of his death; and it is a pleasure to welcome two books that are bound to help towards better knowledge of the saint's life and teaching in the English-speaking world. Mr. Watkin Williams published his life for the first time in 1935 : the present edition is no more than a second impression, brought out expressly by the Manchester University Press so that it may be available for readers in this centenary year. It is a thorough and most painstaking piece of work, lacking perhaps in that inspiration which we might fairly expect from any writer who

has to tell so vivid a tale of human idealism and zeal for souls. Step by step the author follows his hero from his childhood in Burgundy to the novitiate at Citeaux, then to the first foundation of Clairvaux, the rapid expansion of the Cistercian rule during the years of Bernard's intense apostolate, and so to the closing years when the saint wielded greater personal influence than any other man in the Europe of his day. Our own Saint Malachy comes into the tale in these later chapters as well as the first English Cistercians at Rievaulx and Fountains. The saint's last days were clouded by the failure of the second crusade which he had preached, to the consternation of those who had witnessed the many miracles which had accompanied that preaching. But all the saint's amazing record of apostolic activity is here ; and we get also a glimpse, though no more than a passing and unsatisfying glimpse of this amazing monk's interior contemplative life. If Mr. Williams has not been able to fuse the whole into a convincing portrait of one who was saint and genius, orator and man of action, zealot and most compassionate of fathers, then his failure is no more than a reminder that no biographer has so far succeeded in that task.

Mr. Bruno Scott James has set himself the arduous task of translating the Latin of Saint Bernard's letters into readable modern English prose. With the exception of a few letters which have been published in recent years, this collection follows the standard text that can be found in Migne's *Patrology* or in the older folio editions. No completely satisfying chronology of the saint's activity as letter-writer has yet been worked out, and there is much to be said for the compromise that has been adopted in this edition. Letters are here grouped roughly according to their subject matter, and within each group some effort has been made to follow the known chronological order. The total of 469 letters here translated is very much short of the number of the saint's letters now known to exist ; but Dom Jean Leclercq, the Benedictine scholar who has made a new critical edition of Saint Bernard's works his life's task, has not yet given us the results of his long labours.

The most welcome feature of this new version is the boldness with which Mr. Bruno Scott James has broken with the traditional heavy style of an English version that seeks primarily to be accurate, and never escapes the penalty of half-disguised Latinity. Here we can read Saint Bernard in English that reads like English, and retains much of Bernard's freshness and vigour and rhetorical splendour. Not all of the saint's stylistic devices bear translation into a foreign tongue ; but his Latin is so vivid and so personal that it is a thousand pities to dull its impact by a clumsy translation. In this version a translator who has plainly made his task a labour of love has given himself endless trouble to keep the sense whilst modifying a too Latin idiom. Each reader must judge for himself how successful the translator has been ; but for my part I give this version a hearty welcome, and hope that it will awaken new interest in one of the most inspiring orators and apologists in the wide range of Latin Christian literature. In a short introduction the editor has given a useful and well informed account of the methods used by Bernard in the composition and dictation of his vast correspondence, and also of the present state of Bernardine studies with the prospect of a new and satisfying critical edition in the not too distant future. AUBREY GWYNN

MEMOIRS

THE RULING FEW. By Sir David Kelly. London : Hollis and Carter. 25s.

MIRROR TO RUSSIA. By Marie Noële Kelly. Country Life Ltd. 21s.

PICTURE BOOK OF RUSSIA. By Marie Noële Kelly. Country Life Ltd. 21s.

SIR DAVID and LADY KELLY have written books at approximately the same time. This is usually a dangerous venture, but it has for once succeeded. Sir David has written his Memoirs, which covers for husband and wife a long span of years and diverse geographical regions. Lady Kelly writes about her more personal experiences in Russia between 1949 and 1951. Both have written pleasantly and sensibly, and from their different viewpoints have provided readers with an interesting fare.

Sir David is very much a diplomat of the *ancien régime* which existed in pre-1914 days before diplomacy became popular, public and sometimes vulgar. He served under the great men of the old British Foreign Office, such as Sir Eyre Crowe, Lord Tyrrell, Sir Arthur Nicolson and Lord Hardinge. Unlike some of these celebrated men, however, he sought to maintain the advantages of the old world approach and yet combine them with those which are more fashionable in contemporary times. He has not been blind to the defects of the earlier system, and he has been generously tolerant, if sometimes critical, of the new.

Under the system in which he was reared, diplomatists were normally of aristocratic origin, and were required to possess private means. Their background gave them an independence of mind, an ease of social behaviour, and gifts of international connections which were especially useful in that age. But the old world diplomacy collapsed in 1918, and was succeeded by one which, on the surface, was more idealist and yet less practical. If the ' old diplomacy ' nevertheless fell, the cause cannot be entirely discovered in the stars, but has to be sought in the attitudes of foreign statesmen and their servants in the pre-war days. There is no doubt that men like Crowe in England, Lichnowsky in Germany, and Cambon in France, were highly skilled in the execution of the tasks which they were asked to undertake. Many of the younger men, trained in the same school, predominated in the British Foreign Office up to the outbreak of the second World War. Most of them were, however, not of the same calibre. The despatches of many British ministers and ambassadors have now been published in the series *Documents of British Foreign Policy, 1910-1939* ; and men such as Lindsay, Sir Robert Knatchbull-Hughessen, Sir Robert Clive and even that turbulent personality Lord Vansittart himself, do not compare favourably in either judgement or understanding of diplomatic processes with their counterparts in Germany or Italy. Far too many of them were inclined to exaggerate the political importance and views of those who enjoyed the same social background as themselves. Sir David Kelly acts upon the reader like a cool, refreshing breeze, in comparison with many of his colleagues, as they have revealed themselves in either their dispatches or their memoirs. Leading English diplomatists were all too often encased in a closed system ; their

views were fashioned by old world prejudices, and they lacked the perspicacity and elasticity which are so essential in diplomacy at any time. Certainly the political structure of the old world endured a severe shock after 1918, and the conditions of which foreign ministers had to take note were then greatly transformed. Many, however, refused to adapt themselves to changing circumstances ; they continued to hold fast by their ancestral prejudices, and moved in unimportant but socially acceptable circles, ignoring the Consular service as inferior and refusing to learn even that small amount of economic theory which is generally desirable in the modern system. Sir David Kelly became quickly aware of the changes which had to be made ; he was willing to accept the revolution, and succeeded also, for himself, in fusing it with tradition.

The student of modern diplomatic history is particularly struck, not so much by the failure of the old rules as by the failure of new men to apply them intelligently. In the case of the present author, such a negative judgement cannot be made.

Sir David did not occupy the most important posts for the greater part of his career, and it was only at its close that he was awarded the prize of representing his country in Moscow. He was never really in the central headquarters in London ; he was not accredited to Paris, Washington, Rome or Berlin. The most important posts he occupied were in Constantinople, Egypt, Switzerland and the Argentine, apart from his final years in Russia. It is not therefore so much for information on the great political problems that the student of history will linger over these memoirs. They do not throw any fresh light upon pre-war English policy towards the United States, Germany, France, Italy, or Russia (except after 1946). His judgment, for example, on the Munich crisis seems superficial. One feels sure, however, that if he had been in more important posts he would have been far more successful than many of his loftier colleagues. It is rather for an understanding of the proper diplomatic mentality that everyone should be encouraged to dip into these pages. The book is full of subtle nuance and personal impression, blended with tolerance, acumen and kindliness. His judgments on persons otherwise often unfairly discussed in the British press, is illuminating, and if they were accepted by his superiors must have been useful. The passages on Stalin and Peron fall within this category. He shows an unusual and charitable appreciation of Egyptian nationalism, of Peronist socialism, and of Turkish neutrality between 1939 and 1945. He is able to see the other fellow's view ; and slight as some of the chapters may seem, they make a more solid historical contribution to the study of international relations than the Namiers and the Lippmanns of contemporary journalism. Mention may be made of his account of Swiss neutrality, as its execution and its difficulties are of a particular interest to Irishmen who were faced with comparable situations.

Finally, Sir David avoids the trap into which so many of his colleagues have fallen ; he does not assume that the social élite in the countries to which he was accredited is as interesting to his readers as it was perhaps to himself. The book is full of kindly references to pleasant and agreeable friends, but this aspect, relevant in itself, is not overdone. All memoirs of this sort are

normally submitted to the censorship of the Foreign Ministry concerned, and diplomats are not free to move about with the same frankness or carefreeness which is given to politicians and to journalists. Despite these restrictions, Sir David manages to pack a great deal of useful, practical information on the political position of several countries. And in regard to both Egypt and the Argentine, controversial issues are liberally and openly discussed.

And perhaps most important of all is the introductory chapter in which he outlines his personal attitudes and sketches what he regards as the fundamental principles of international conduct. These passages reflect a mellow wisdom, and a generous understanding which flavours every issue raised in subsequent chapters. No young man entering the diplomatic service should miss the opportunity of reading, and pondering over, this world of charm, common-sense, and wistful melancholy which to-day is as rare as it is necessary and attractive.

Lady Kelly's book *Mirror to Russia* is of entirely different character. It is a travel book. Between 1949 and 1951 Lady Kelly was able to induce the Soviet authorities to let her see Russia, as no visitor probably, from the West, has seen it since 1939. The last book on this subject was written by Captain Fitzroy MacLean. His book *Eastern Approaches* also had a good deal to say about the Russian countryside and the Russian people, but the main object was to discuss the political situation in Eastern Europe. Lady Kelly is exclusively concerned with Russian life and the Russian people as their artistic works reveal themselves. She travelled by rail, by car and by river steamer to many of the towns and villages of old Russia. She journeyed down the Volga to Stalingrad and Astrakhan, and visited also the romantic, and normally inaccessible, peaks of Astrakhan. In many ways Lady Kelly's work is more charming and more unique than that of her husband, whose preoccupations are mainly political. She writes with both distinction and simplicity, and the variety of contemporary scenes from modern Russia is brought home fully and artistically to the reader. Her second chapter, on the Moscow scene, along with her description in chapter one of the Muskva river, is better than anything of this sort which has appeared in this century in English. Her descriptions of ikons, Kremlin and churches rings true, and reconstructs before the mind's eye the intangible beauty and sadness traditionally associated with Russia. Her judgments are restrained and fair. This is a book which one will read with pleasure, even if one knows one will never visit that country. Lady Kelly will do good service precisely because she has ignored the political aspects of the country, which most people wrongly regard as decisive.

And finally, the illustrations could not have been better chosen nor more finely reproduced. The same can be said of the book of pictures which she has also edited separately and which fits in so well with *Mirror to Russia*. One word of criticism in regard to the photographs : more attention might have been given to buildings other than churches, and exiled Russians have complained that there are other aspects of the Russian countryside of which she might have taken note.

DESMOND WILLIAMS

BORN TO BELIEVE : an Autobiography. By Lord Pakenham. London : Jonathan Cape. 1953. Pp. 254. 18s.

LORD PAKENHAM is still a comparatively young man, but his varied and vivid experiences have enabled him to write an attractive and interesting autobiography. His sense of justice rather than political or economic arguments led him to Socialism ; and he found dogmatic fortifications for his naturally religious temperament in Catholicism with an inevitability that made little of intellectual obstacles and gave point to the Disraeli apophthegm,"Man is a being born to believe ", which he has chosen as the title of his book.

The socialist doctrine of equality seemed always to Lord Pakenham to be the logical extension of Christianity to politics, and his reading of the Papal Encyclicals convinced him that a sincere Catholic could also be a sincere member of the British Labour Party. He cannot recall having spent any time on Catholic social teaching before he entered the Church, but as he has obviously done so since, it is a pity that such a well-equipped economist and sociologist should have omitted an extensive treatment of the subject from an autobiography whose every line is profoundly marked by its author's profession and practice of Christian beliefs and virtues.

His modest self-portrait is adorned by interesting and, often, mildly-amusing impressions of his political friends and adversaries. In these character-sketches and anecdotes there is malice towards none, and his charity deters him from really critical assessments of the many figures in his crowded gallery. He interprets so narrowly Father Leen's observation that " people are always better than they appear", that he might have made a greater contribution to historical truth if excess of kindness did not sometimes blur the features in some of his generously painted miniatures. But, to this complaint he would, no doubt, reply that " there is far too much denunciation in politics anyway." " I think," he adds " that a political convert is particularly liable to it."

Lord Pakenham's attitude to politics does him credit as a Christian. He asks whether religious interest conflicts with political success as the world judges it, and admits that it may on occasion. He is distressingly aware of the anxieties and conflicts that confront the politician who must strive " to reconcile the self-confidence, the splash, the drive demanded by his public with the humility, the meekness, the turning of the other cheek required by the Beatitudes."

While he sets high store by rational argument and critical judgment, he is also conscious of the large measure of the inarticulate that exists in human affairs. Nevertheless, the extent to which he is influenced by emotional rather than by intellectual considerations is surprising in one who regards himself as an intellectual and who has chosen academic work as his profession. Something other than cold intellectualism, surely, induced him to quote with approval from a letter written by the late Lord Lothian referring to *Peace by Ordeal,* Lord Pakenham's well-known history of the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921 :

> So the final issue lay between what I call the Statesmen and the Saints in politics. You cannot make religion and politics coincide because human beings are not angels and you cannot carry the religious spirit of absolute fidelity to abstract principles into politics without disaster. The British attitude was that of the Statesmen. So fundamentally

> was that of Griffith and Collins. But De Valera's from the start was that of a man of religion in politics who if need be will endure the last horrors of martyrdom for the Faith that is in him.

There is no doubt of the strength and sincerity of Lord Pakenham's convictions and of the personal satisfaction he derives from them. But many readers who respect or even envy him his convictions without being able to share all of them, might expect from a thinker of his gifts a more intellectually satisfying account of his development than he has given in this arresting and warm-hearted autobiography.

PATRICK LYNCH

THE MEMOIRS OF HERBERT HOOVER. Vol. I 1874–1920, pp. 496 ; Vol. II 1920–1933, pp. 405. London : Hollis and Carter. 30s. net each vol.

THESE two volumes are a record of Mr. Hoover's remarkably full life from his birth in a three-room cottage at West Branch, Iowa, in 1874 to the end of his term of office as President of the United States in 1933. As a successful mining engineer he had worked and lived in many parts of the world before he entered public life in 1914 as Commissioner for Relief in Belgium. When the United States came into the war he became Food Administrator in Washington, and after the armistice, emerged a world figure as a result of his outstanding humanitarian efforts on European relief and reconstruction. For seven years after 1921 he was United States Secretary of Commerce, and in 1928 defeated Governor Alfred E. Smith, the Democratic candidate in the Presidential election.

Specific practical problems have always shown Mr. Hoover at his best, and in the organization of relief he found full scope for his brilliant administrative abilities. The technical and economic aspects of post-war relief were particularly difficult ; and new problems were created for his vast pioneering effort in food administration—the first of its kind—by the political intrigue and rivalries of the victorious European powers to whom " the greatest famine since the Thirty Years War did not seem to be of any great immediate concern."

Nowhere in these memoirs does Mr. Hoover show a finer breadth of vision than in his account of the Treaty of Versailles. He is severe on the European statesmen but he is also just, for, despite his passionate acceptance of Wilsonian idealism, he was aware that the European allies, with all their confusion, selfishness and materialism, had problems of their own. In any event, he saw that they were more suspicious of each other than of the Americans. This, indeed, was the man who, according to John Maynard Keynes :

> . . . imported into the Councils of Paris, when he took part in them, precisely that atmosphere of reality, knowledge, magnanimity and disinterestedness which, if they had been found in other quarters, also, would have given us the Good Peace.

In 1919 he left Europe with the resolute conviction that America should do its best to prevent war and to maintain peace, but that it should never

again become involved in Europe's wars. His generous heart had been touched by the sufferings of Europeans, but he also felt pity for them in their failure to achieve the standards of conduct of the Americans. Lloyd George had said in July 1918 : " What are we fighting for ? Not because we covet a single yard of German soil, not because we desire to deprive the German people of their legitimate rights. We are fighting for the great principles laid down by President Wilson." At Versailles, however, Wilsonian principles were soon lost in a maze of secret treaties to which the European allies had committed themselves for sharing the spoils of victory. Mr. Hoover was, of course, disillusioned by the realism and cynicism of Paris, but he was far too intelligent and well-informed not to know that the forces behind the rejection of American ideas were far deeper than the intrigues of diplomacy or the foibles of statesmen. Whatever the diagnosis, however, he felt that the disease which afflicted Europe was a dangerous and infectious one. If it could not be cured, he, at least, could try to preserve the health of America.

The second volume lacks, unfortunately, much of what made the first so interesting and valuable. The reader who expects a penetrating and illuminating account of the fabulous American scene after 1919 will be disappointed. Mr. Hoover's European achievements and his record of them gave promise of a really enlightening commentary on the events of the years during which he occupied high office in Washington. But the promise is not fulfilled ; and he has left the Great Depression to be treated in a later volume.

It would be unfair to criticize Mr. Hoover adversely for having failed to understand the economic developments of the Twenties : his failure was no greater than that of many others who were equally able and, perhaps, better equipped. But the passage of twenty years has led him to recognize little the extent to which the troubles of the Thirties had their origin in the Twenties. No one expected that his memoirs would contain one of the more sparklingly percipient chronicles of the Jazz Age, but it requires no great perspicacity to see from the viewpoint of the 1950's that the Great Depression cast a lengthy shadow before. There is more penetration, however, into that penumbra in a single novel of F. Scott FitzGerald than in all the four hundred achromatic and lifeless pages of Mr. Hoover's second volume, amply fortified, as they are, by extracts from official speeches and documents.

Mr. Hoover's own personality does, indeed, emerge from these memoirs : that of an honest, sincere, frank American conscious of the personal and family sacrifices he made to devote his life to the public service of his country. He displays towards his political opponents a generosity and a magnanimity that has not always been observed by public men. He was courageous, too, as is evident from the speech in which he eulogized the virtues of the late President Harding and castigated the worthless friends who had helped to betray him.

Of Mr. Hoover's political and intellectual evolution there is little to be said. In the White House, his hope " was interrupted by the Great Depression—a product of some misdeeds of our own, but in the main the penalty of a great war and its impacts on Europe." His economic philosophy was one of " regulated individualism," not *laissez-faire,* which " had died forty years before when Congress passed the Inter-State Commerce Commission and the Sherman Anti-Trust Acts." " The problems which confronted me," he writes,

" were the weak spots in existing regulations and the socialist drive to put the Government into business " . . . " Moreover, the wounds of the Depression opened our flesh deeply to collectivist infections from Europe." The economic crisis and the chronic unemployment that followed did nothing to shake Mr. Hoover's faith in economic liberalism. On an early page he had written, about life in Iowa in the 1870's : " The reflex of a religious individualism is necessarily also economic individualism." The child was father of the man who, commenting on the Republican defeat in 1933, writes :

> I am so immodest as to believe that had we been continued in office we would have quickly overcome the depression and approached economic and social problems from the point of view of correcting marginal abuse and not of inflicting a collectivist economy on the country. We would have better preserved the personal liberty to which the nation was dedicated.

PATRICK LYNCH

POLITICS AND ECONOMICS

A HISTORY OF GREEK POLITICAL THOUGHT. By T. A. Sinclair. Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1952. pp. 317. viii 250.

IT is safe to say that whatever knowledge the average cultured man possesses of the subject of this book it is derived almost exclusively from the two great masters, Plato and Aristotle. The reason for this is simple : they are the only two Greek writers on political theory whose work has survived to us in anything but a fragmentary state. Protagoras or Democritus may have been as influential in their time, but the reconstruction of their thought is now inevitably a scholar's labour. It is this labour to which Professor Sinclair of Belfast has applied himself in this book, and his success has been such as to make this, probably for many years to come, the standard general treatment in English of this large and important chapter in human thinking on the problems of government.

The volume falls into three main divisions, the Platonic and Aristotelean syntheses being the great central section which is flanked on the one side by the pre-Socratics and on the other by the less systematic writers of the empires of Alexander and Rome. It may surprise some readers to find Homer appropriating the first chapter in a history of political theory, but Professor Sinclair is surely right in pointing out the paramount importance of the Homeric epics as the seminal influences in every century of classical Greek civilization—and this despite the fact that for Homer *polis* " signifies City but not State " (p. 14). The collapse of the old Hellenic tribal order which Homer had typified was made inevitable by the social and economic changes of the seventh and sixth centuries B.C., changes which instituted a monetary and commercial basis for life over much of the Greek world in place of the old pastoral and agricultural conditions. The search for a rational foundation of civic order

to replace the primitive loyalties which had been lost was henceforth to be the predominant obsession of Greek political thinking.

The struggle for control of this new world of thought was to be concentrated at Athens in the fifth century, which we are accustomed to consider as the golden age of that city in the realms of drama and the arts. Perhaps if we knew more about the writings of such men as Protagoras we might consider the claims of the fifth century to be the golden age of philosophy also. Professor Sinclair's remarks on Protagoras are particularly valuable, and he does well to remind us that, in the absence of authentic personal writings, we are largely dependent for our picture of the great Sophist on the biased presentation of Plato. In particular Sinclair's reconstruction of Protagorean political theory suggests that, despite its positivistic principle that " that which is socially beneficial is ethically sound " (p. 60), it is no barren individualist scepticism but is based on a real conviction of civic responsibility and the importance of obedience to the law. It is also suggested that Protagoras and other " Sophists " anticipated Platonic teaching in urging the acceptance of systematic training for citizenship by education.

Professor Sinclair hardly adds anything to our portrait of Socrates by proclaiming that " he died in the cause of freedom of conscience " (p. 92). If we suspect, as Professor Sinclair does, that the Socrates of the Platonic dialogues is the product of the disciple rather than of the master, and that " the four books of the *Memorabilia* of Xenophon contain a mass of material professedly Socratic, but in all probability put together from various sources " (p. 169), it is hard to see how our assessment of what Socrates died, or indeed lived for, can be anything but an exercise in personal speculation. This is the least satisfactory section of the whole book.

Plato himself naturally occupies the largest individual proportion of space in Professor Sinclair's treatment. There are many original touches in this presentation. An example is the chronological method employed ; Professor Sinclair refuses to isolate Plato from his historical background and his relations with contemporary thinkers. So we have chapters on " Plato and Isocrates " (whom this book perhaps unduly depreciates) and " Xenophon and Plato," as well as concise and helpful discussions of those great set-pieces, *The Republic* and *The Laws*. Professor Sinclair makes a bold attempt to solve the riddle of the relationsip between the two larger platonic treatises. He believes that discrepancies between them have been in recent studies exaggerated. The key to the problem is Plato's conviction that the state ruled by law is only the " second-best " state and the fact that government by " philosopher-kings " is regarded as *ideally* best in both works does not prove that Plato ever seriously believed that his programme in *The Republic* had any chance of being realized in the material world, or, if it were realized, of being finally permanent. " Things do not last for ever except in the world of ideas, the unseen reality ; in this world nothing ever stays the same . . ." (p. 159). When Plato went to Syracuse, he went (according to Professor Sinclair) to establish, not the State of *The Republic* but the State of *The Politicus* and *The Laws ; The Laws* itself cannot be ascribed, as it so often is, solely to the disillusion engendered by the

failure of his Sicilian venture. In fact, the politics envisaged in both treatises could quite consistently have found simultaneous place in Plato's thinking. Professor Sinclair has thus made Plato more consistent at the price of accentuating emphasis on the dualist elements in his thought. At the end of his life, this interpretation suggests, Plato's distinction between Ideal and Material became so sharp that he lost interest altogether in politics as the main stream of Greek thought understood them. " Plato's last thought about the State were not about the Greek *polis* at all, but foreshadowed the *Civitas Dei* of St. Augustine." (p. 207).

After Plato's titanic struggle for perfection, Aristotle's tentative examination of possibilities has elements of anticlimax. It is " . . . the difference between a middle-class professional man, a husband and a father, scientific observer and practical administrator, and Plato the Athenian aristocrat, mystic, ascetic, puritan " (p. 210). But even Aristotle, for all his gradualism, is unable to shake the universal Greek tendency to confuse the constitution of a State with its political government and hence to deny any possibility of *peaceful* revolution from one *régime* to another. This may explain why Aristotle (as Professor Sinclair complains) does not trouble to explain " how a good and moderate constitution " (his own ideal " polity ") "may be attained " or " by what processes of change an oligarchy or a democracy may be made to approximate to ' polity ' " (p. 228).

The post-Alexander period marks a change of emphasis in Greek thought, though Professor Sinclair doubts whether Alexander himself had very much to do with it. The ideal of a benevolent despotic monarch is found before Alexander's age in Isocrates's Cyprian speeches, while the concomitant spread of belief in the universal equality and brotherhood of all men, not merely all Greeks, is anticipated in the fifth century Sophist Antiphon and in the dramas of Euripides. It was the Stoics, however, who gave the paramount philosophical impetus to both ideas, though Professor Sinclair points out Epicureanism too, as with Lucretius, had a high humanitarian ideal. In his discussions of the little-known thinkers of the third-century Academy and Lyceum and of the " Hellenising " Judaism of Alexandria, the book makes important additions to knowledge of Hellenistic and Roman political conceptions, but it is hardly likely to alter " the common readers' " general impression that the supreme achievement of Greek thought on the State and its government were (paradoxically) reached when its horizon was still the comparatively limited one of the *polis*.

The value of the book is much enhanced by the excellent bibliographies and selected lists of important original references which Professor Sinclair has appended to each chapter. The author pays his readers the compliment of supposing that they possess a fluent reading knowledge of Greek, and he therefore has no scruple in referring frequently *verbatim* to his originals. Perhaps, in our non-classical atomic age, such an attitude is over-optimistic ; but it is to be hoped that it will not deter those interested in *modern* political theory from reading this book, even if they have no Greek. They might find the reading to be not only an interesting but a salutary experience.

JOHN B. MORRALL

BRITAIN'S ECONOMIC PROBLEM. By C. A. R. Crosland. London : Jonathan Cape. 1953. Pp. 222. 12s. 6d.

THIS book combines an admirable exposition by an Oxford economist and Labour Member of Parliament of the essential facts of Britain's economic position since the war with an excellent analysis of the problems to be solved. Mr. Crosland's policy is a politically moderate one which never loses sight of economic realities. He wants the Labour Party to continue as the party of social reform but at the same time " to put before the country a bold long-term policy, whatever the sacrifice entailed, for the economic regeneration of Britain."

Since 1945 Britain has in certain fields made quite remarkable economic progress, but Mr. Crosland shows with lucidity and conciseness that fine as these achievements have been much more remains to be done if permanent solvency is to be sought. The events of 1951, alone, were proof that three successive years of reasonably satisfactory equilibrium in the balance of payments were no guarantee of long-term viability. Mr. Crosland summarizes the facts and arguments to demonstrate that Britain's real troubles originated in the Thirties and that the instability of recent years would have become apparent had the last war never occurred. " Britain," he writes,

> has finally lost her industrial leadership to the United States, and that country now bestrides the world in so colossal a fashion that the dollar and non-dollar worlds can reach no proper balance ; and Britain finds herself merely the tallest amongst the pygmies who make up the latter. At the same time she has lost the subsidy to her standard of living which for many decades she had received from primary producers the world over ; and she is now the biggest victim of the growing shortage of food and raw materials.

From this situation the American trading surplus arises, but Mr. Crosland has no patience with the popular nonsense which criticizes America for having such a surplus. " If we dislike the surplus," he says, " we can eliminate it by buying fewer dollar goods ; we cannot ask the Americans to give away the goods we cannot pay for." But he insists that Britain must solve the problem in its own way, not by adopting " policies which happen to find favour with the U.S. Administration."

Mr. Crosland isolates three principal determinants of Britain's future prosperity : the world shortage of food and raw materials, the dis-equilibrium between the dollar and non-dollar worlds and the instability of the American economy. Although he expects a big expansion in world trade he, somewhat paradoxically, admits that there is little prospect of substantial increases in American imports in the near future. Britain, he urges, can and must expand exports particularly in the coal, steel and engineering industries, and he argues that Britain's deficit with hard currency areas can be further reduced so that " net dollar disbursements are mainly confined to covering the deficit with the United States, which after a further reduction in British imports should normally be of a modest character." It will be apparent that this analysis closely resembles the more realistic part of the Labour Party's programme, *Challenge to Britain*, which was published in June 1953.

Particular emphasis is placed on the difference between Britain's own dollar problem and that of the remainder of the sterling area. Mr. Crosland shows clearly how large was the part of American Aid since the end of the war that went to meet, not Britain's dollar requirements, but that of other sterling

countries. He estimates that a total of £1,900 million in South African gold and American dollars was available to Britain over a period during which Britain's dollar deficit was only £1,200 million and gold payments to the European Payments Union amounted to about £100 million. Thus Britain and the colonies would have added to the sterling area reserves had it not been necessary to finance the dollar deficits of independent sterling area countries. Over half of the gold and dollars received by Britain since the war have been used not for Britain's own benefit but to cover the deficits of the overseas sterling area.

Amongst Mr. Crosland's proposals for helping Britain to attain viability on a permanent basis is a suggestion for restricting capital movement of sterling and for rationing the overseas sterling countries which draw their dollars from the London pool. Some restrictions of the kind he has in mind already exist by agreement, but the limitations that he now proposes are so serious that if they did not lead to the break-up of the sterling area they would almost certainly transform it. Mr. Crosland might have given more attention to the other sterling countries with claims to share in the reserves. Surely those countries have a right to a say in the framing of policies concerning drawings on the London pool? High-handed action by Britain without previous consultation with other sterling countries has caused widespread dissatisfaction in the past, and unilateral action now would almost certainly destroy any hopes of reaching free agreement about the future of the reserves. Much of the trouble which faces the London financial authorities is a legacy of their own wartime policy-making, when there was no attempt to segregate sterling balances arising in the normal course of trade from transactions of an obviously non-commercial character. In recent years, the need for consultation on policy matters has been recognized in the meetings of sterling area Finance Ministers, but so far, there is no evidence of agreement on a practical coherent policy, much less on the need for a permanent governing authority empowered to take decisions. Such arrangements as are made continue to be the outcome of vague agreements on vague principles expressed in platitudes which are often susceptible of equivocal interpretation. In short, one feels that an attempt should be made to devise effective machinery for operating the dollar pool in the interest of the sterling area as a whole. Certainly, consideration should be given to the matter before the adoption of expedients which would confer on the Bank of England powers which the free countries of the sterling area might well regard as intolerable.

Not every reader will subscribe to all Mr. Crosland's views on policy, although these are generally reasonable and always realistic. But he presents his facts with authority and undertakes his analysis with clarity. The greatest need of the British economy is increased investment, yet at recurring intervals since the war the level of investment has had to be temporarily reduced. Moreover, even in coal and steel the expansion of production has proved altogether inadequate. Indeed, it is not at all certain that methods of increasing output more drastic than those contemplated by Mr. Crosland may yet be necessary if Britain is to survive as a great industrial country.

The heart of the matter is that the dollar problem is caused by the tremendous productive capacity of the United States whose productivity is so

high that, despite high wages, American goods can beat their foreign competitors in price and quality on the markets of the world. Even if Britain solves its investment problem, there will remain the necessity for finding markets in competition not merely with the United States but with Germany and Japan. This particular task may not be as simple and straightforward as Mr. Crosland occasionally suggests. He has, however, written a book which students and others will find a most useful and reliable guide to important contemporary economic trends.

PATRICK LYNCH

ANTHROPOLOGY AND COMPARATIVE RELIGION

PRIMITIVE MAN AND HIS WORLD PICTURE. By Wilhelm Koppers (translated by Edith Raybould). London: Sheed & Ward. 1952. 16s.

THE name of Dr. Wilhelm Koppers needs no introduction to any serious anthropologist or sociologist of these days. The disciple—indeed the evangelist—of the illustrious Pater Schmidt, he was Professor of Ethnology in the University of Vienna before the *Anschluss*; and had already inspired students of his own to engage in arduous and fruitful fieldwork before the Nazis had forced his retirement, a retirement now ended. The substance of his latest book is based upon two studies of his own and one of von Fürer-Haimendorff, his assistant. His own studies were carried out upon the Fuegian Yamana and the Central Indian Bhil; his assistant worked amongst the Chenchu, a more northern community than the Bhil.

Father Koppers' thesis is that ethnological data can be used for clearing away some of the mists in which early man's history is enshrouded. He has undertaken to show that the concept of a Paradise and a Fall, the concept of a Supreme Being and the concept of an ethical factor underlying exogamy, must all have existed from the very beginning of human history. He summarizes his conclusions in his second appendix (paras. 1-5, pp. 207–208). First, no trace of a "pre-logical" mentality is found either in modern "primitives" or in early man; secondly, the facts point to the preservation by the modern primitives of an original knowledge of a *Deus Unus Creator, benignus sed autem vindex,* together with the other essentials of the Eden-story; and thirdly, science alone can clarify the historical point, whether man's body was a fresh creation or genetically related to other animal forms—although he agrees with those who maintain that the difficulties attached to the descent-theory are so great as to weigh seriously against it.

In support of the third conclusion Dr. Koppers invokes the studies of Portmann and of Kalin from the side of physical anthropology, a side he holds to be of co-equal importance with that of cultural anthropology. Since, however, his essential theses are not affected by specifically anatomical considerations, these particular views of his can be left for discussion in some other context. The worth of his book depends upon the force and cogency of his purely ethnological evidence and arguments.

His definition of "primitive" as applied to present-day tribes is based upon Grabner's Rule, and he has selected his material for study accordingly.

As Koppers does not state this rule explicitly it is as well to quote it here : " A stage of civilisation that seems to be the earliest in every part of the world in which it is found must be taken to be the earliest knowable form of culture for the human race." A study of the work and writing of the school of Schmidt—the school of the *Kulturkreislehre*—indicates that this school extrapolates the term " earliest known " to mean " earliest in time " (in the absolute sense). Not only the Rule but also the extrapolation were accepted by Elliot-Smith and Perry, who had a religious and metaphysical background wholly different from that of Fr. Schmidt. I was a guest-student at their course of cultural anthropology given in University College, London, in the hey-day of the " Egyptian " diffusionist hypothesis ; and I remember well my interest as much in the mentality as in the learning of its leaders. It is of value to note that the English translation (by Rose) of *The Origin and Growth of Religion* appeared just one year later than Elliot-Smith's *Human History*. The difference between the two books, each involving an acceptance of Grabner's Rule, might be summed up as the difference between Smith and Schmidt !

If Dr. Koppers errs, then, he does so in agnostically respectable company ; and we may concentrate upon his work rather than upon his guiding axiom. He and the Smith-Perry group are agreed upon what tribes or communities are primitive in the sense of his book. Unlike the London folk, he has had first-hand experience of the peoples he writes about. Further, he has had a sufficient training in both the Eastern and the Western classics of the Aryan language-groups, a background to which neither of the London pundits could lay claim. This makes Koppers' analyses of the theologies of his Indian material at once more interesting and more convincing. Beginning with an informative discussion of the difference between the Dyauspitar (Latin *Jupiter*) and the Bhagwa (Russian *Bog*) he proceeds to a succinct survey of the main branching developments of Indian religion and their underlying philosophies. The content of this, his sixth chapter, might well be brought to the notice of all our Irish undergraduate students of the mediaeval war of ideas. It would show them that the human mind is of the same kind everywhere, in its vagaries as well as in its rectitudes.

The distinction that Fr. Koppers drew in his earlier study of the Yamana, a distinction between native and extraneous elements of natural religion, he draws also in his later Indian study. He shows that he has the scholar's scrupulous sense of the " not proven," even when the evidence leans to his own side. The operation of this sense is apparent throughout the book, but especially in its eighth chapter, in which the possibility of a coercive proof of a primary Revelation is discussed. There are 316 references to the literature following upon the 240 pages of text, and there is an excellent index stretching over eight pages. The translation seems to have been well done. There are two minor blemishes : the word " deduce " should have been replaced by " infer " wherever it is found in pages 182 and 184 ; and the German latinization of *criterion* should have been avoided in the English version.

M. A. MACCONAILL

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN RELIGION. By Jaroslav Černy. London : Hutchinson. 1952. Pp. xi+159. 8s. 6d.

This small volume is one of a series on World Religions under the general editorship of Professor E. O. James whose chair is that of the history and philosophy of religion in the University of London. Its author declares the book was planned and written for the inquiring layman and that it will certainly not satisfy the Egyptologist. There can be no question that the subject has very great interest for the inquiring layman and little doubt that he will be pleased if not entirely satisfied with the summary Professor Černy provides. The Greeks judged more wisely than they knew when they discerned in the Egyptians the outstandingly religious people of pagan times. Lacking to an unusual degree the spirit of logical and untrammelled enquiry which made the Greek the supreme philosopher, certain elements in Egyptian mentality and character enabled them to achieve a relationship with God in many ways more perfect than that of other peoples who were not granted special revelation of Him.

Professor Černy compresses the immensely complex history of Egyptian religion with great skill. The conservatism of the Egyptian was so strong that he is able to find on prehistoric slate palettes religious emblems which are described by St. Cyril of Alexandria, as still in use at least 3,000 years later but for all that radical changes did take place. The early fetish worship of objects ; a throne, a hill, a sceptre ; or of animals, the cobra, the cow, the falcon, persisted and tinged the views even of the most enlightened generations. It is sad to find that a decadent and conquered people while remaining intensely " religious ", or more properly speaking superstitious, returned, under the influence of a false nationalism, to the worship of animals. In Roman times there was a Serapeum, a cemetery of mummified bulls, in all the 42 nomes of Egypt, with the state-aided funerary rites, and it is on record that while the killing of a cat or ibex by accident was not a capital offence, even a Roman citizen who had the misfortune to do so was certain to be lynched by an angry mob.

This is a far call from the symbolic idealism which made of the sun a mere type of the creator and life-giver of all things, or the beliefs which grasped, as no other people's did, the relationship between moral rectitude and purity of heart and the favour of God. Professor Černy is inclined to discount the importance of the " Negative Confession " before the Osiris which was the Egyptian's Particular Judgement, and he does not cite the single moving text in which an Egyptian official takes credit to himself, not only for his care of the poor and the widow, but because he was pitiful even to his enemies. But he does very rightly stress the fact that the enormous appeal of the Egyptian cults to the Hellenic world was not based on mere naturalism, nor even on a very skilful use of ceremony and mystery both aesthetic and psychological, but on an appeal to the deep instinct which makes men seek an explanation and completion of this world in an after-life. Where the Greek and Roman " could offer only a vague and gloomy solution " of the problem of immortality the Egyptian, for all his constant lapses into magic and formality, continued to

believe behind all his " divinities " and their manifestations, " *quia Deus est et remunerator.*" It is the essential of salvation.

In all study of comparative religion it is natural for the Catholic, if we may use an Irish bull, to hear anticipatory echoes. There are plenty to be caught in Egyptian history. Points of actual contrast in detail are many—the high priest's rod that is magical, the waters turned to blood, the wise sayings of Amenemope which reappear in Proverbs, or the first version, so to speak, of Psalm 103 which a Pharoahonic poet carved in stone (Professor Cěrny does not cite it). But there are deeper things, such as beliefs in the supernatural, and symbolic value of an action that seems to foreshadow sacraments, the ideas of expiation and atonement, the notion, even in some very vague way, of possession or indwelling of God, or a divine presence, the faint suggestion of a genuine incarnation, such things haunt the mind as one reads. They are not of primary interest to Professor Cěrny and most of the book leaves an informed reader to his own thoughts. This is as well for when in a final chapter the Professor does invade this field he is guilty of some egregious oversimplification. " The resurrection of Jesus has an exact parallel " in the cult of Osiris, he declares. And he even loses his historical acumen to accept a cheap rationalist theory. " The worship of the Virgin and the picture of her with the child Jesus in her arms almost certainly owe a great deal to the influence of Isis with young Horus on her lap." This is not only to be ignorant of Christian icongraphy, but to share the over-cleverness of those who assert that Fokien ware depicting Koum Yum with her child gave rise to devotion to Mary. The conviction that mother and Son must have peculiar and intimate relations is a feeling which is the root of Catholic devotion, but it has roots in humanity—Chinese, Egyptian, or Latin—and all God-made.

On other points, however, Professor Cěrny is most interesting. He traces briefly but clearly the unique position of Serapis, the God deliberately, artifically made for State worship by the Ptolomies who achieved a universal cult and great popular devotion, a thing surely unique in the history of religions, and on the next page points out as clearly how the Christian refusal to accept State control and interference, their recognition that man's relation, public and private, with his Creator is something transcendent and beyond the whim or interference of Pharaoh or Emperor made it a religion utterly different from man-made creeds. It is an astonishingly practical and modern conclusion to a work that begins " when all our fathers worshipped stocks and stones."

There are one or two slips. The great Sphinx was of course a flawed outcrop in the quarries of the Pyramid builders, but the head which gave it meaning, and in fact was all of it that was visible above the sands in Grecian times, and through most of Egyptian history too, was a royal portrait of a much later date, a Middle Kingdom Pharaoh, perhaps Amenamet III. And incidentally the name of this very great Pharaoh does not appear even in the inadequate Chronological table which finds a place for Ptolomy, Eurgetes II or Decius. But on the whole the selection of matter and its illustration by well translated text and inscription, make the book one that an inquiring amateur will welcome.

M. Bodkin

SHORTER NOTICES

JOHN ADAMS AND THE PROPHETS OF PROGRESS. By Zoltan Haraszti. Harvard University Press ; Geoffrey Cumberledge, Oxford University Press. 1952. Pp. xiv+362. $5.00.

THERE can be few of us who have not succumbed at one time or another to the temptation of adding marginal comments to books we happen to be reading. John Adams was particularly addicted to this habit and in this book Mr. Haraszti has gone to great pains to edit Adams' marginalia and the particular passages which provoked his comment, wrathful or otherwise. The result is an interesting volume of table talk, some of it significant. Many of the great man's comments, it is pleasing to see, were of the usual " this is bosh " variety ; " Fool ! Fool ! " was his criticism of Condorcet at one point ; " this silly woman " was his opinion of Mary Wollstonecraft. Of Godwin's *Political Justice,* he wrote on the flyleaf " This book exceeds in deliberate falsehood whatever of Pharisaical, Jesuitical, Machiavellian or fanatical is to be found in the University Library ". The book does throw a good deal of light upon the attitude of an important American statesman and political theorist towards the " philosophes " from Bolingbroke to Rousseau and others who helped to create the " climate of opinion " in which the events of 1775 and 1789 took place. There are one or two minor slips in the book ; Hooker was hardly an admirer of Calvin (p. 44) and the George Fox mentioned on p. 181 is presumably Charles James Fox.

H. F. KEARNEY

A HISTORY OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT. By J. B. Bury. 2nd edition, with Epilogue by H. J. Blackham. Oxford University Press (Home University Library). 1952. 246 pp. 6s.

THIS classic of rationalist liberalism (first published in 1913) is now presented in a revised form with additional notes and with an Epilogue reviewing the contemporary situation. Much of Bury's argument now reads ironically, in particular his view that his own age had seen " . . . a decisive and permanent victory for liberty." (p. 198). Mr. Blackham, though apparently sharing Bury's religious and philosophical scepticism, admits implicitly that the older writer's strictures against the traditional Christian churches were often unjust (e.g. Blackham's concession that " . . . policital Catholicism in Europe today is democratic and progressive enough not to be an immediate threat to freedom." p. 210). The Epilogue rightly points to the fields of literature and education as those in which the various modern assaults on intellectual freedom are most likely to operate.

JOHN B. MORRALL

PORTRAIT OF THE PRINCE REGENT. By Dorothy Margaret Stuart. London : Methuen. 1953. Pp. xii+240. 18s.

PORTRAITS of " Prinny " have a way of distracting the beholder with a wealth of stars and ribbons. In life tailoring seems to have been his principal and most abiding interest. Though Miss Suart deprecates the efforts of Thackeray to

undress royalty, it is to be feared she herself has made no serious effort to see beyond the frivolities to the man who because of his birth played an important, if negative, part in his time. Too much is made of his good fortune in being born in an age of good taste ; his own individual leanings were even here uncertain and often flamboyant and ostentatious to the point of vulgarity. Much is made of his part in absolving the children of Lord Edward Fitzgerald from the Attainder incurred by their father, but his responsibility for the disappointed hopes of Ireland is dismissed without a glance, as a Whig libel. But it is hard for an Irish reader to have patience with an author who can sum up Lord Edward's life as " tragic-comic." Alas in that beloved memory there is nothing for laughter or smiles, but the tears are noble.

M. Bodkin

MARY TUDOR. By H. F. M. Prescott. London: Eyre and Spottiswoode 1952. Pp. xiii+433. 30s.

The volume before us is another disturbing piece of evidence in favour of those who hold that excellence is no guarantee of success even for published work. C. S. Lewis' fine book *Pilgrim's Regress* did not reach a second printing until the appearance of the popular *Screwtape Letters*, acclaimed by the Daily Mail Year Book the outstanding " book of the year." This at once sold several fresh editions. Miss Prescott's *The Man on the Donkey* received the same accolade from the same source. Now, after a considerable time out of print, her biography of Mary Tudor is reissued. It is given a more gracious title and an excellent new introduction, and should give great pleasure to that very large section of the reading public which prefers truth to fiction and seeks it in historical biography. Incidentally scholars will have in more accessible form a book which since they acclaimed its appearance has been the recognized authority in its own field.

Whatever be the motive for the reappearance of the book it is entirely welcome. Three women, grandmother, mother and daughter each played a major part in historic events of the first importance. There is still no first-class biography in English of the greatest of the three, Isabella of Castile, but with Garrett Mattingley's *Catherine of Aragon* and Miss Prescott's book, the Catholic cause which all three championed is well sustained. Mary's story is a grim tragedy relieved only by her high Tudor courage and her not at all Tudor holiness. It would be easy to find other words for the later and just occasionally the authoress does permit herself a sigh at Mary's otherwordliness, a sigh only too reminiscent of the attitude of even the best of Mary's Catholic advisers. On the whole however the reader is left in no doubt that the Queen and the Cardinal (Pole was a truly kindred spirit) were defeated by those forces which had hated Christ and would, according to His prophecy, continue to hate His friends. The Tudor tale is almost too glamorous, and Mary too was a lover of jewel and gesture. Her story was bound to be colourful and gripping but in this book beautiful writing and deep erudition have made it much more. It is the nearly perfect life of one who, if neither a great queen or a genius, was a heroine by any true standard of judgment.

M. Bodkin

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